kaleidoscope 1970

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

Archives
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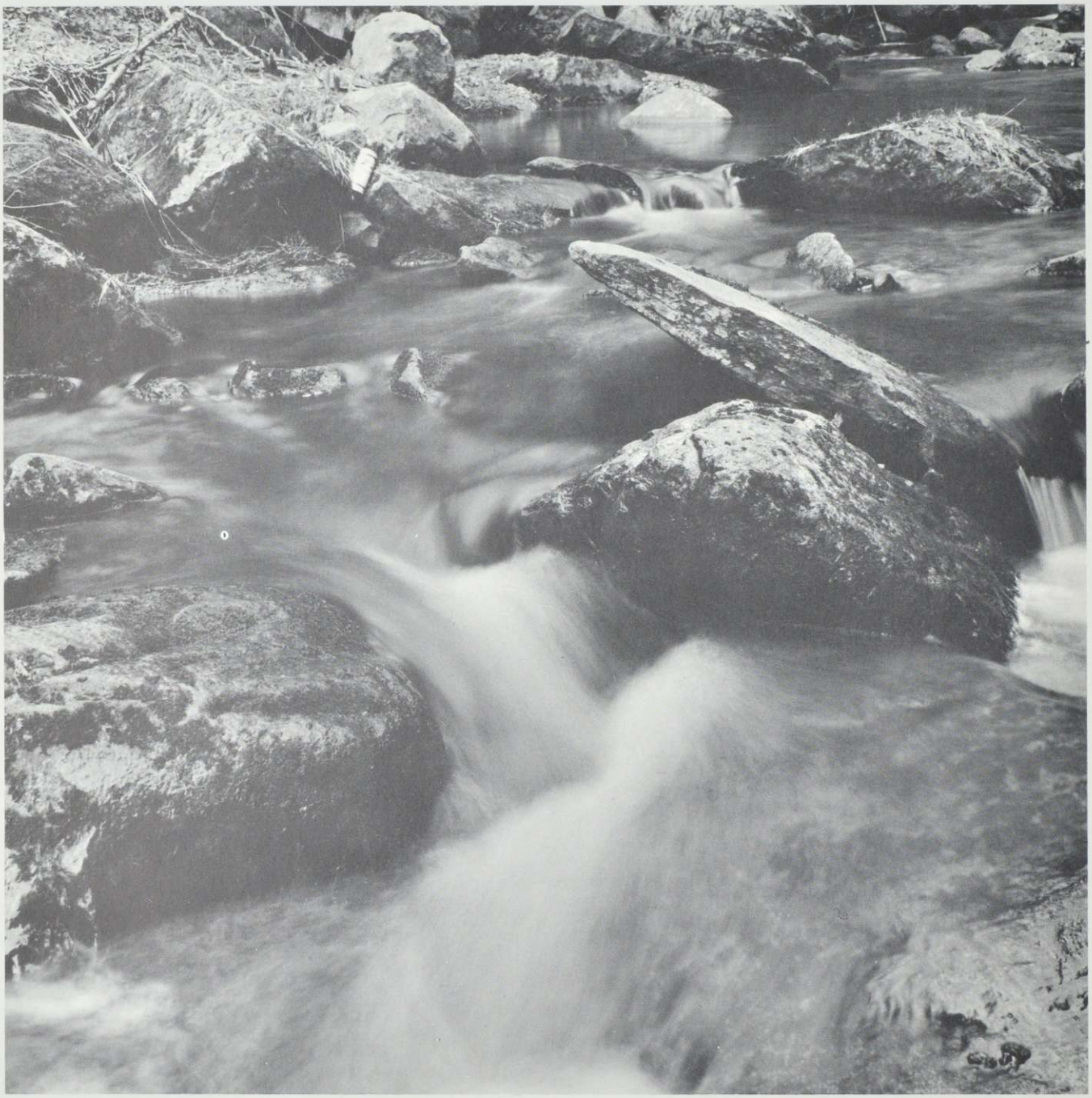
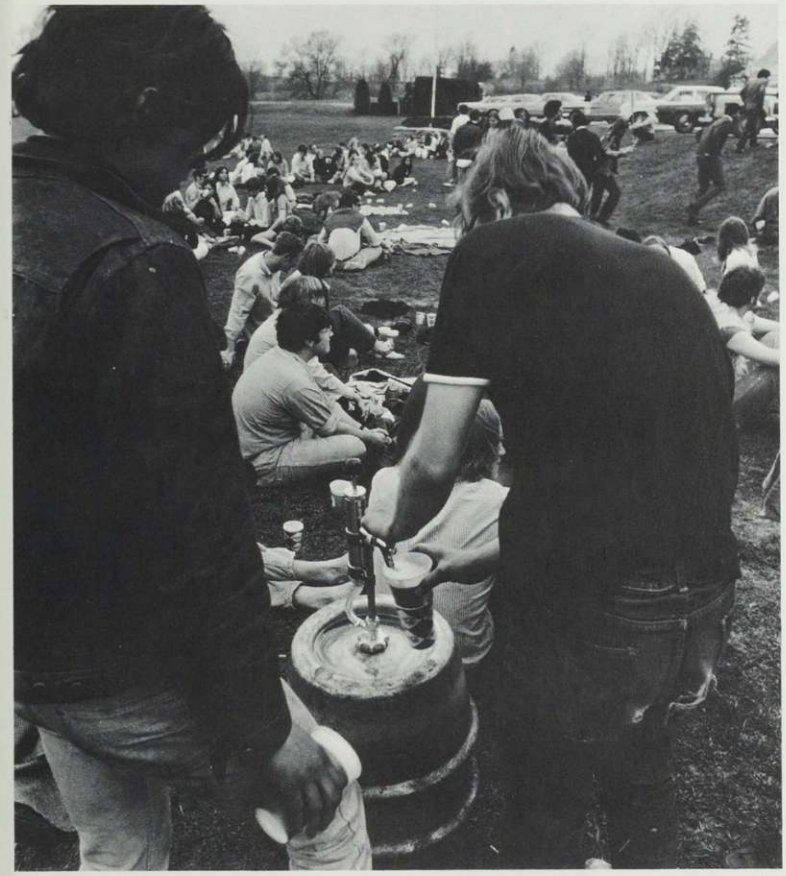
PRIVATE WAY

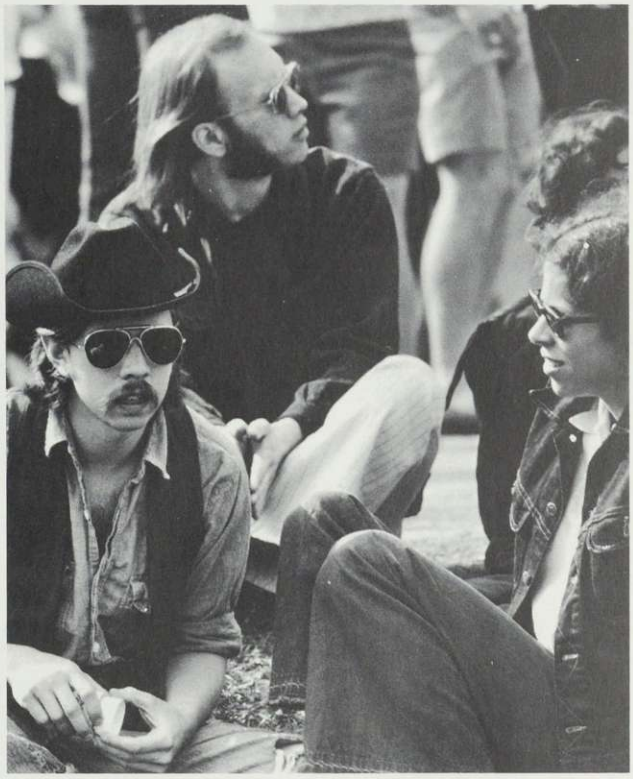
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

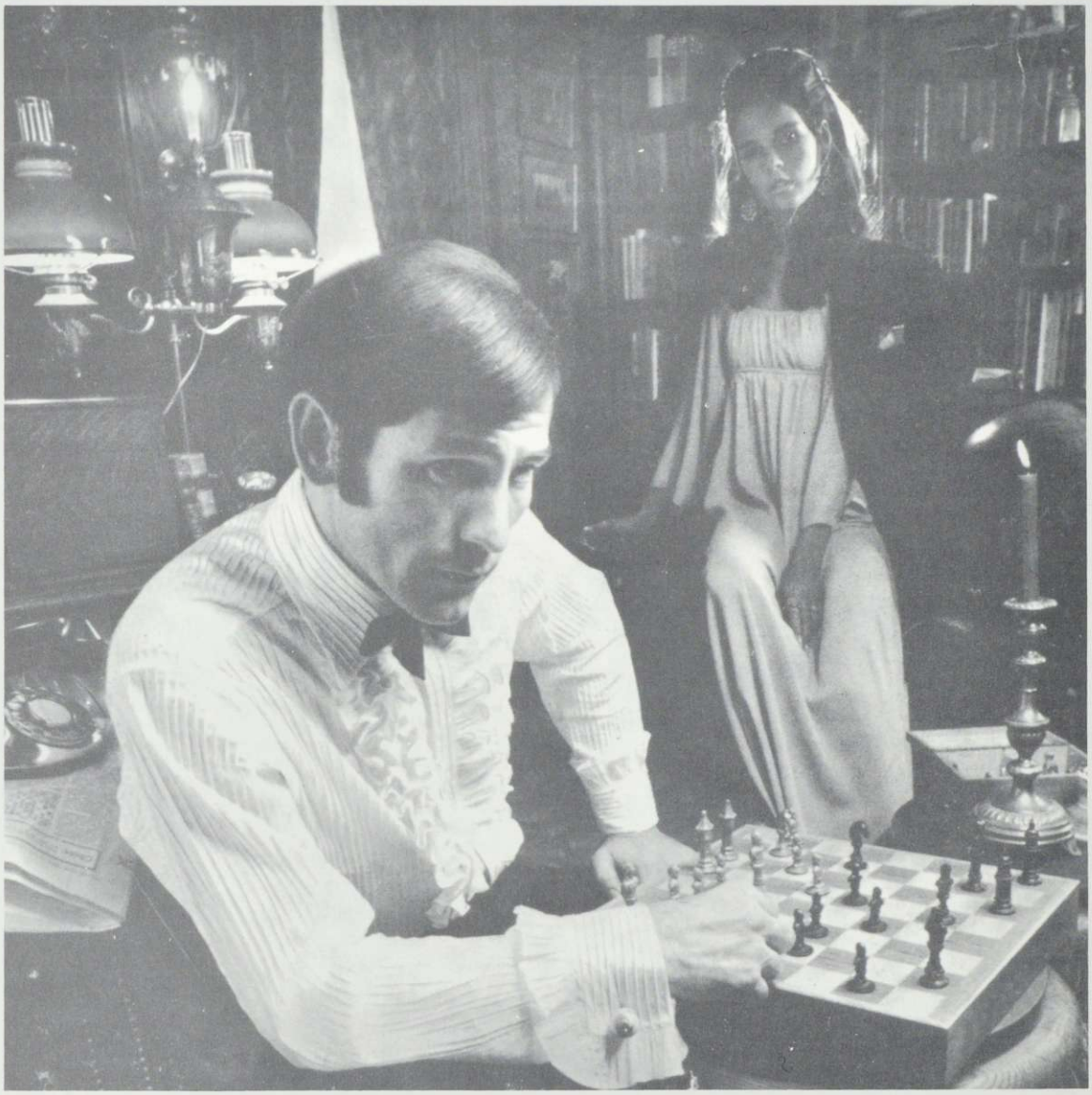
PRIVATE WAY

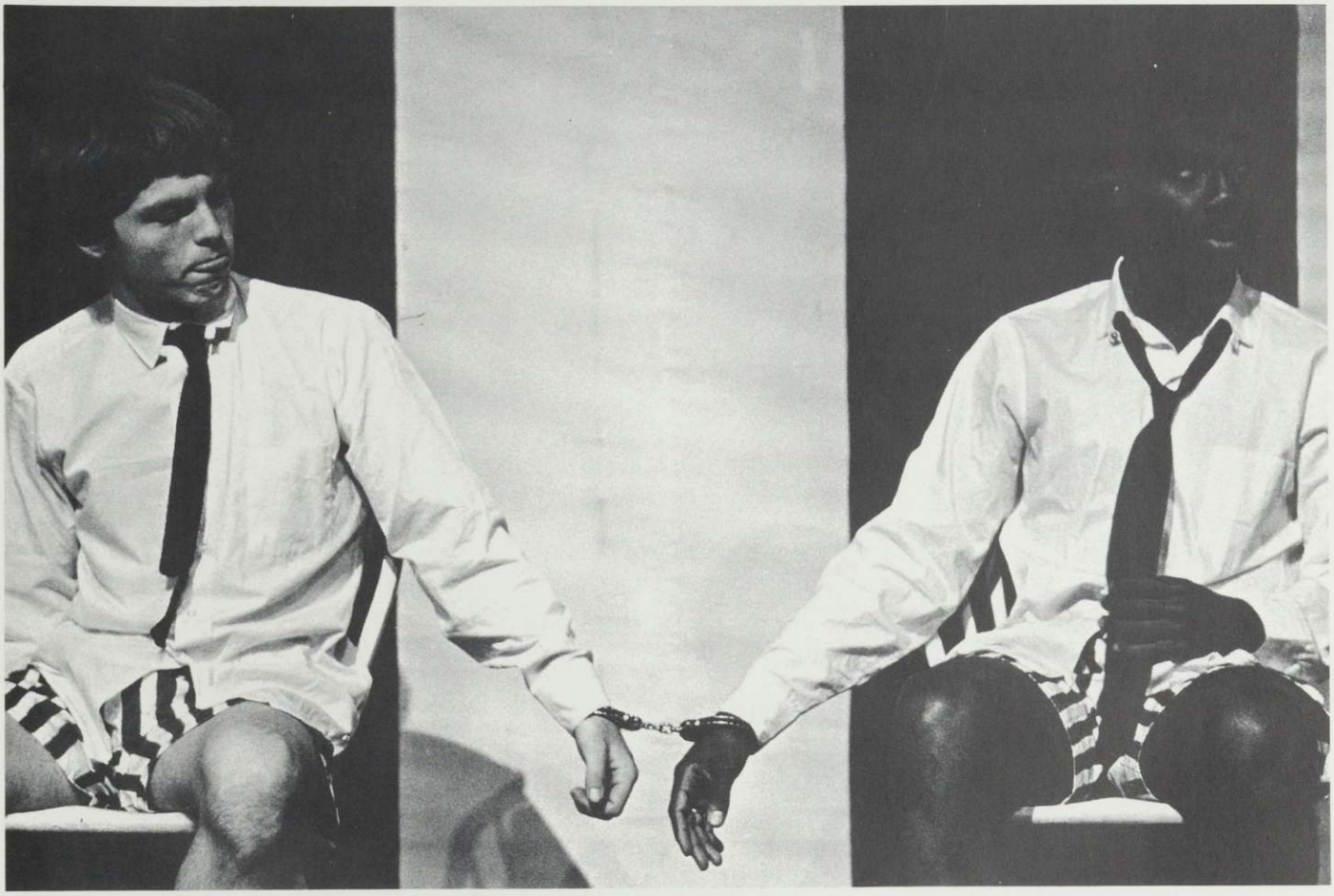
"I used to want photography
to be recognized
as one of the fine arts.
Today
I dont give a hoot in hell
about that.
I think photography's
principal function
is to explain man to man,
and to himself . . ."
Edward Steichen
March 27, 1969

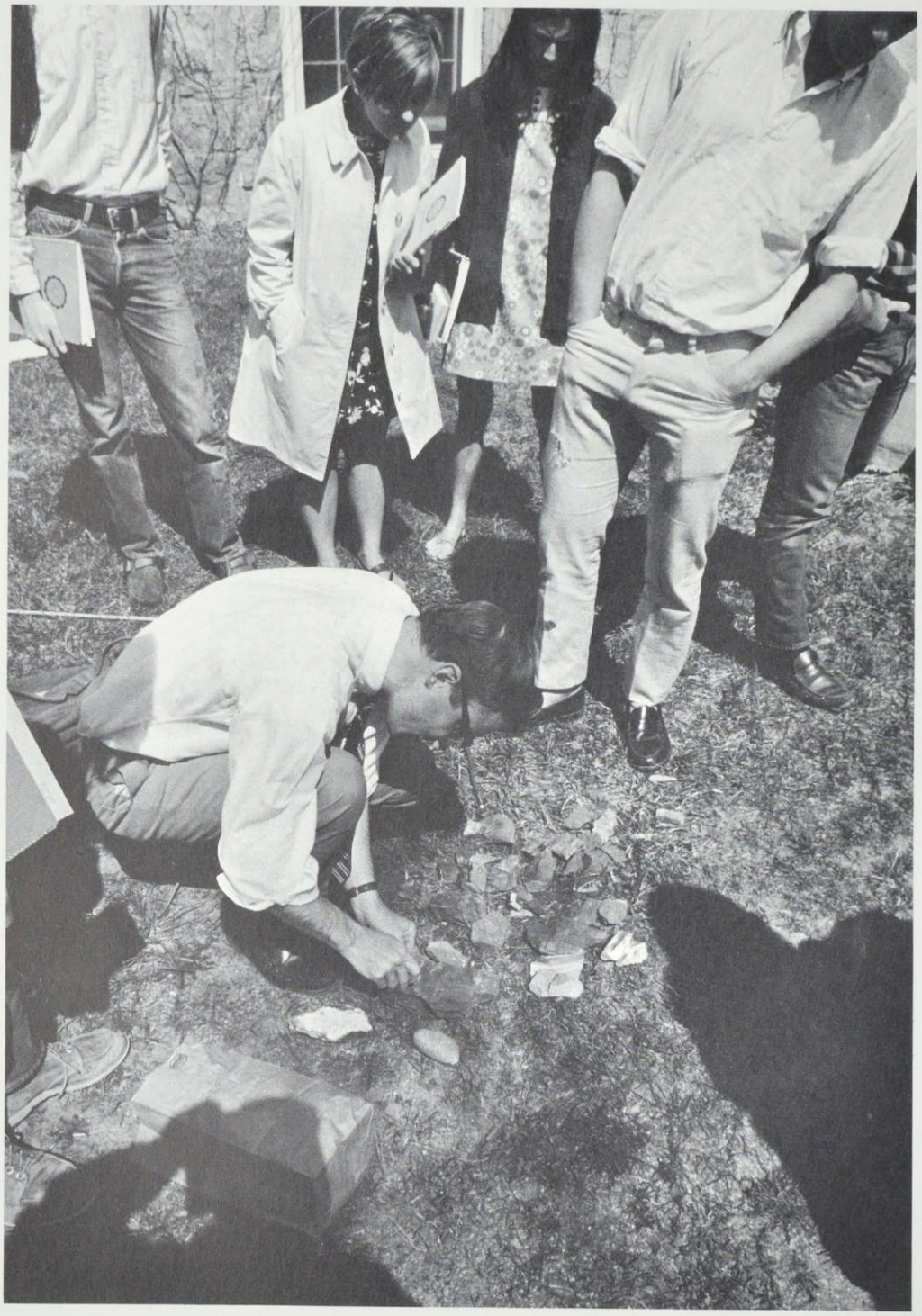


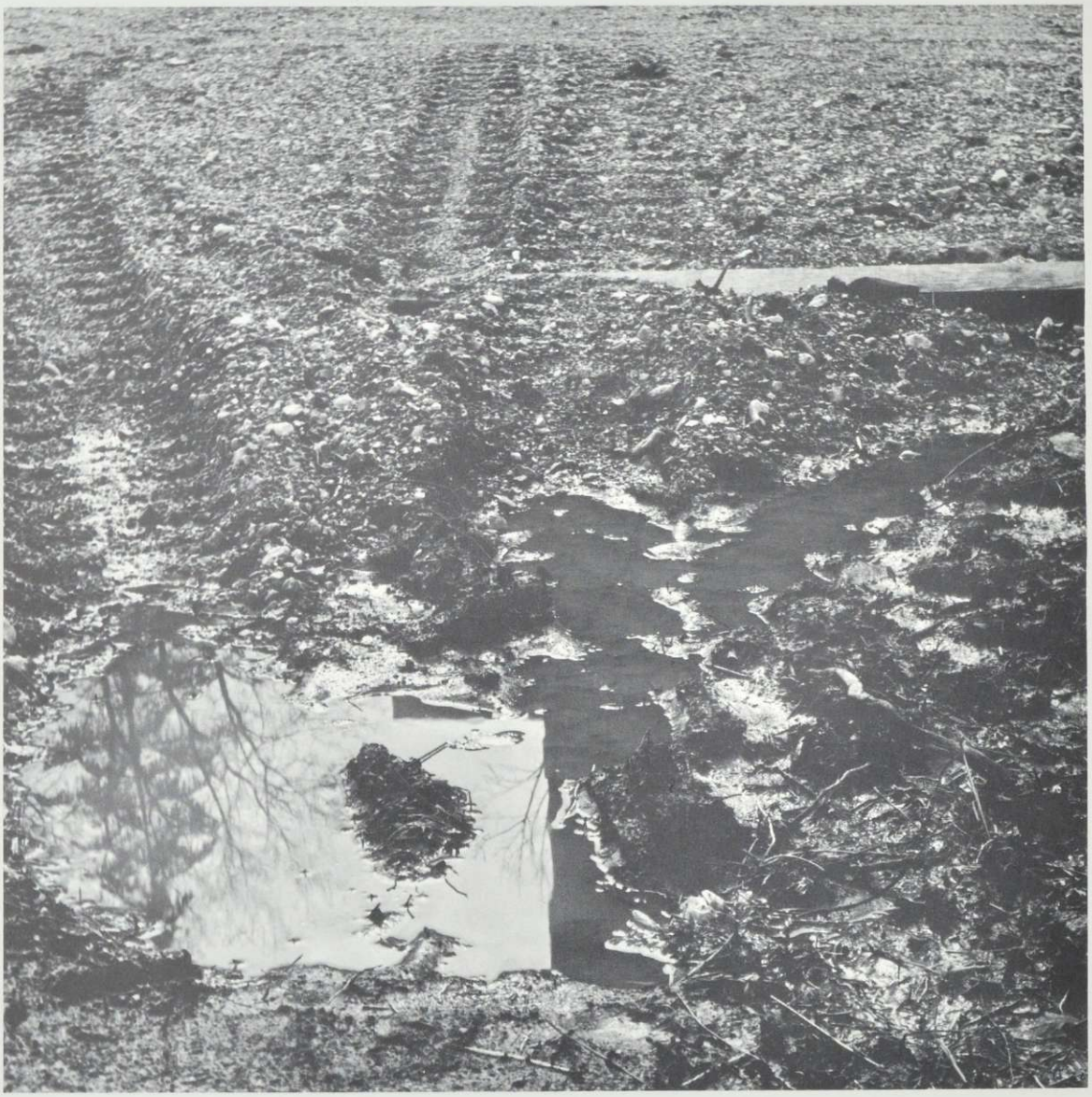


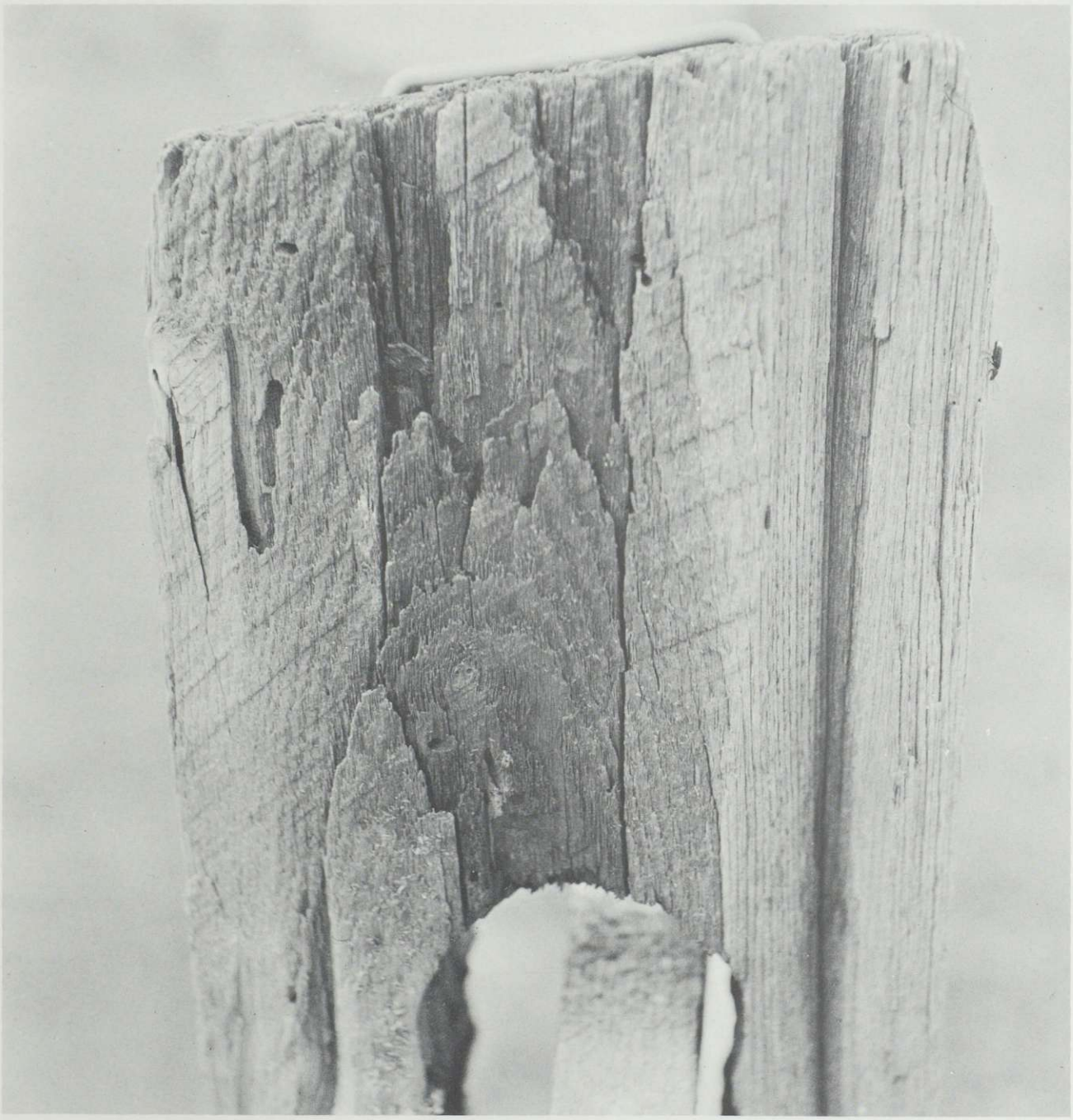


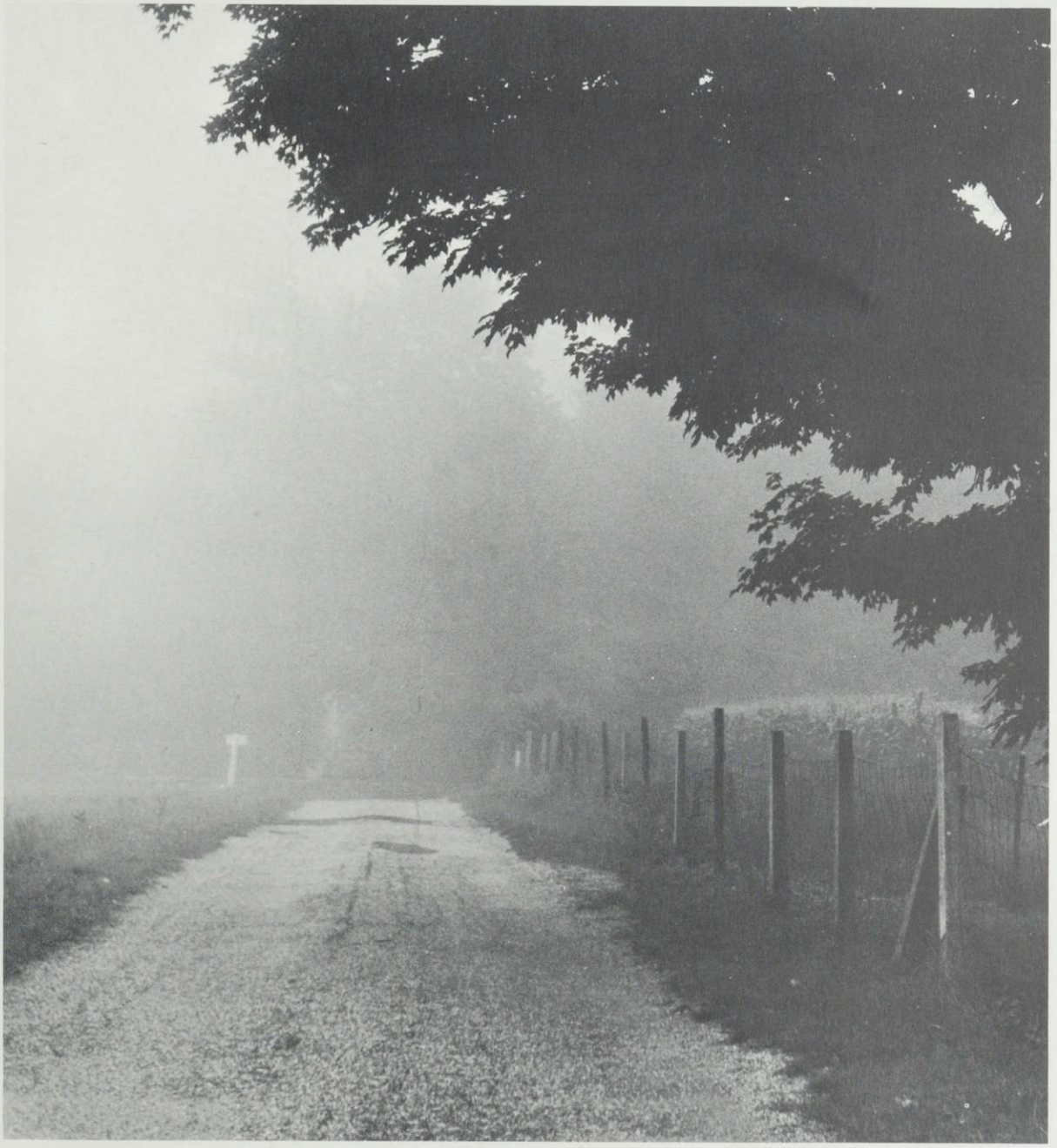


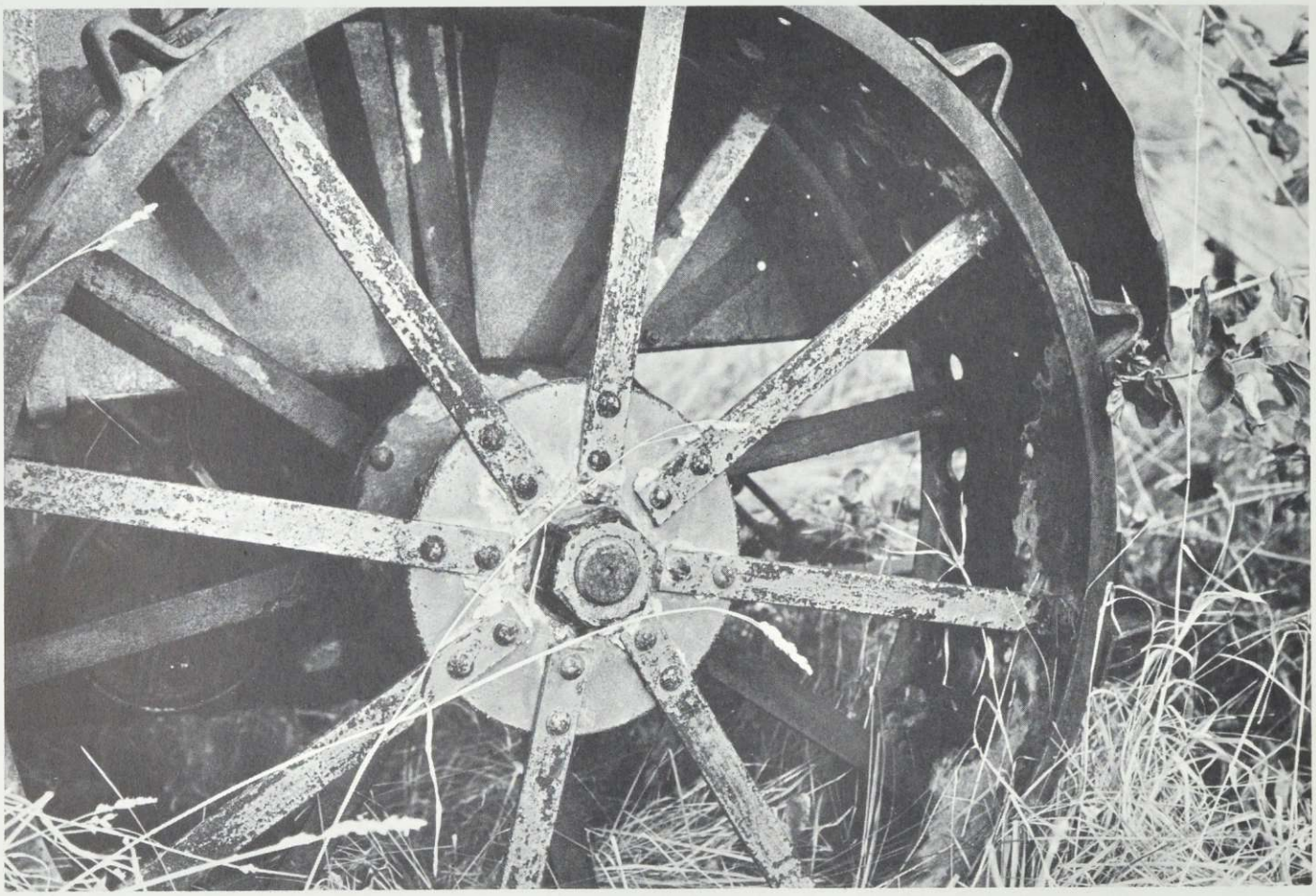


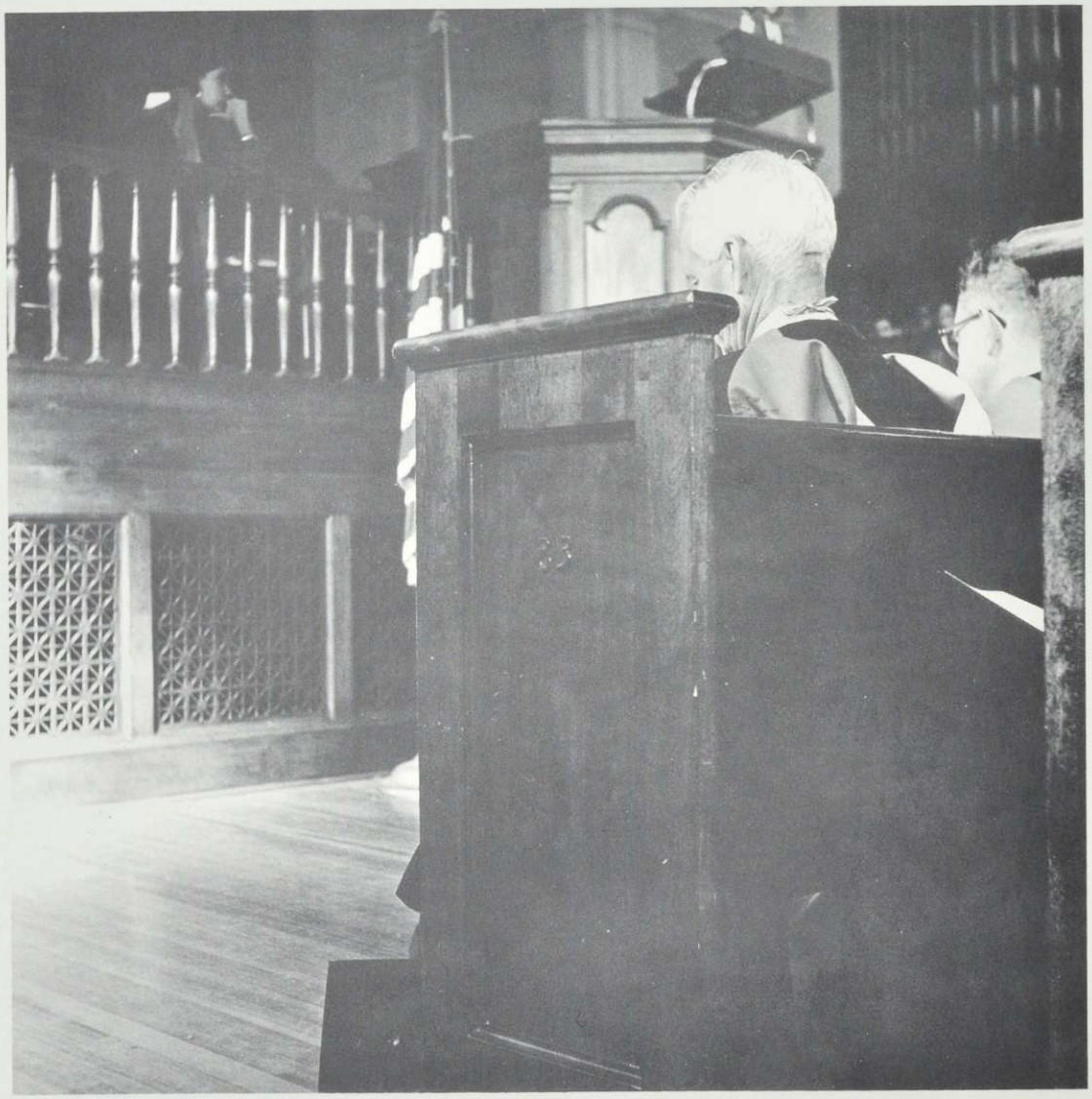


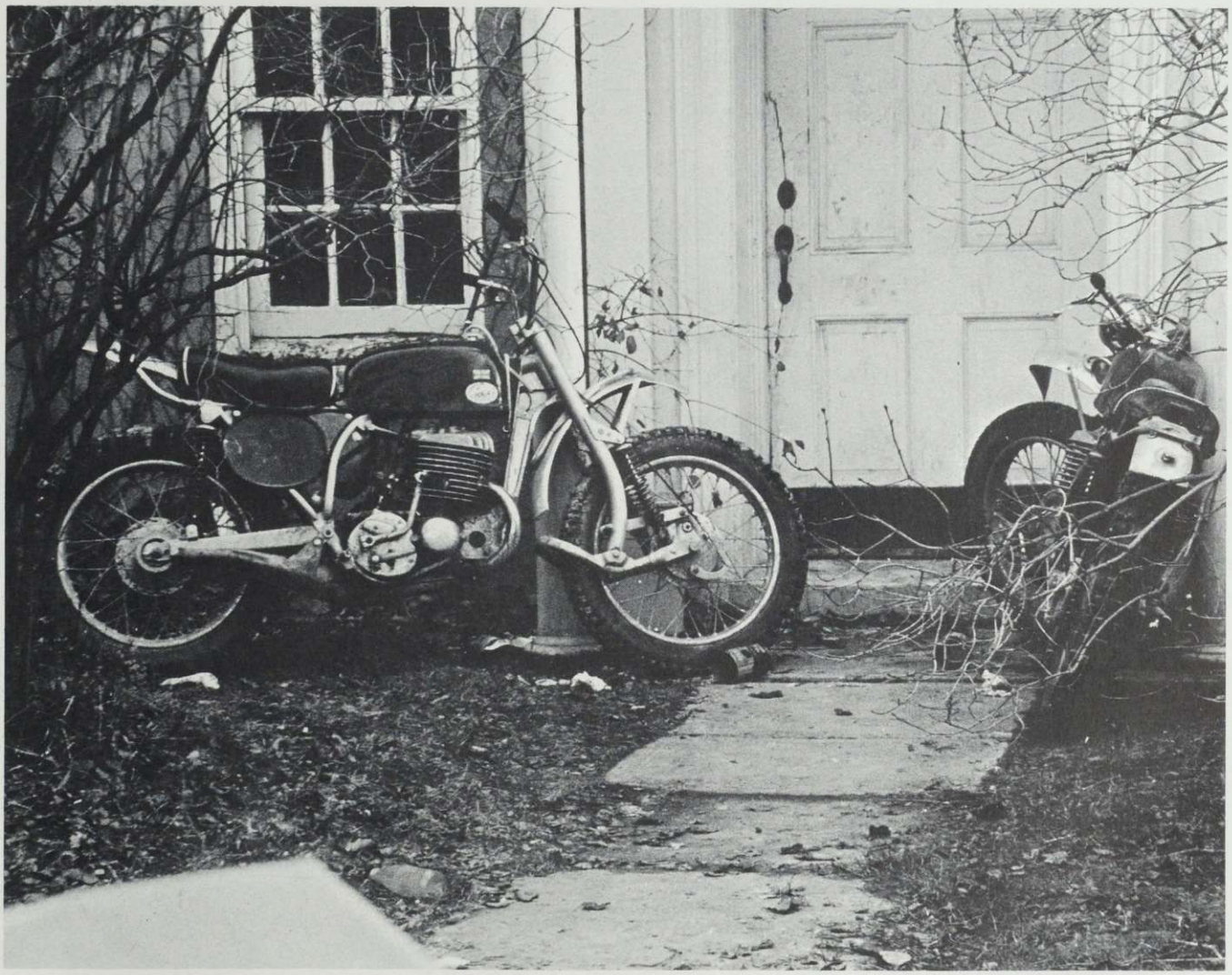


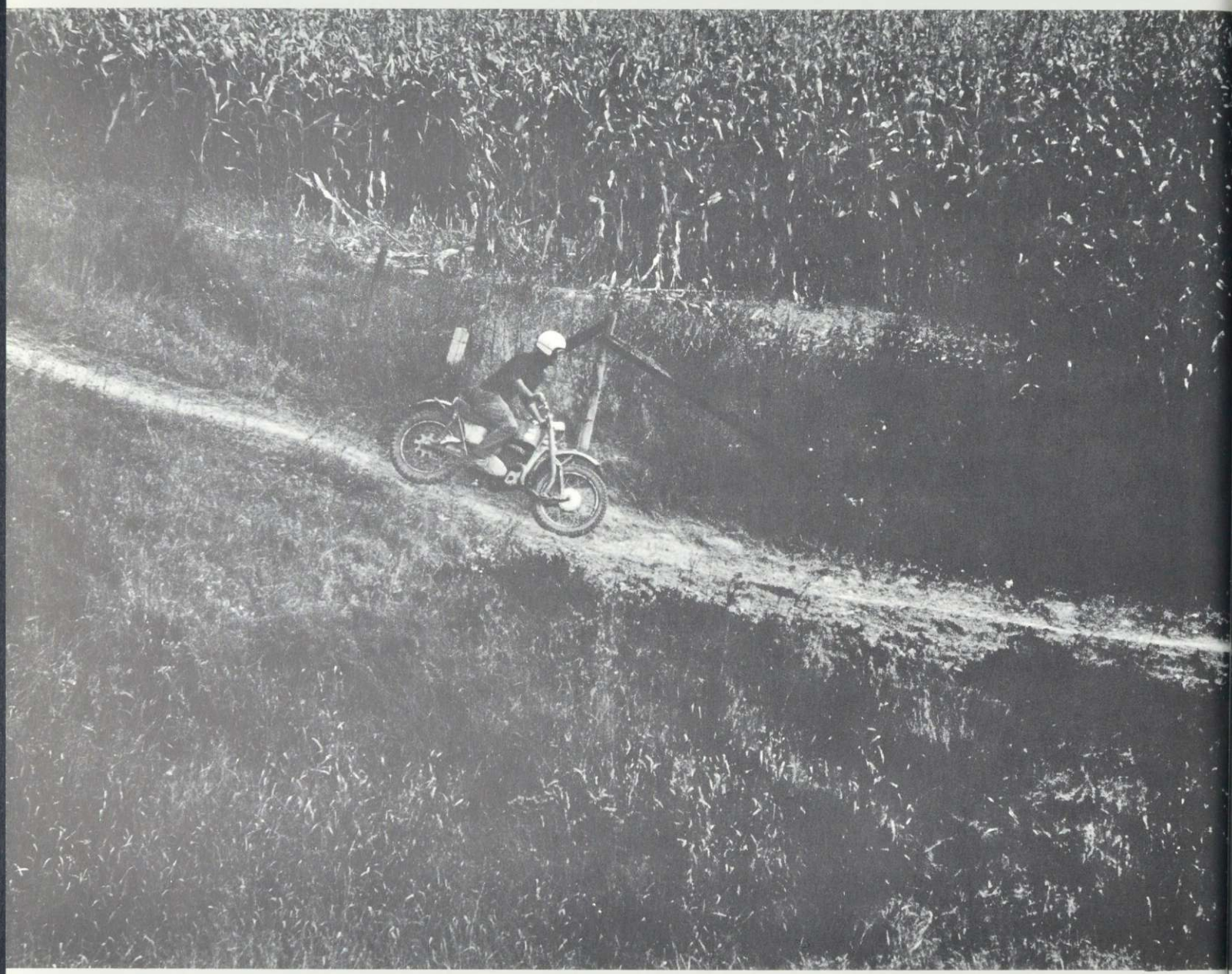


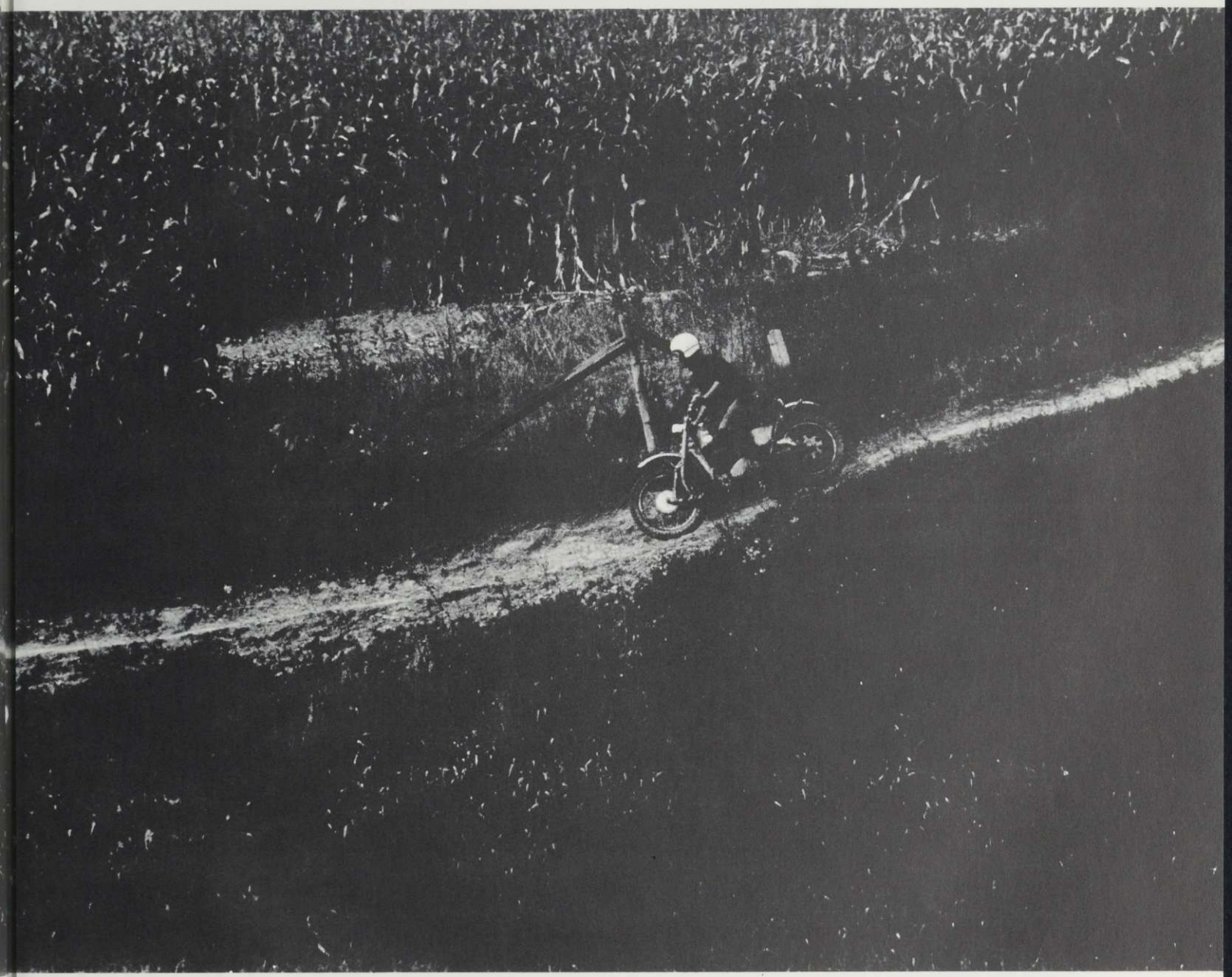


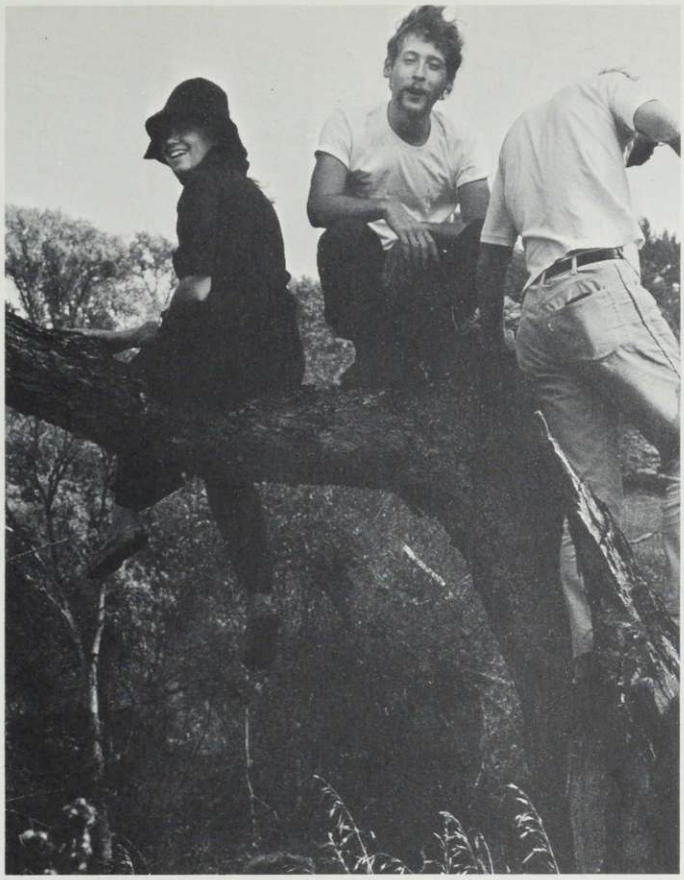


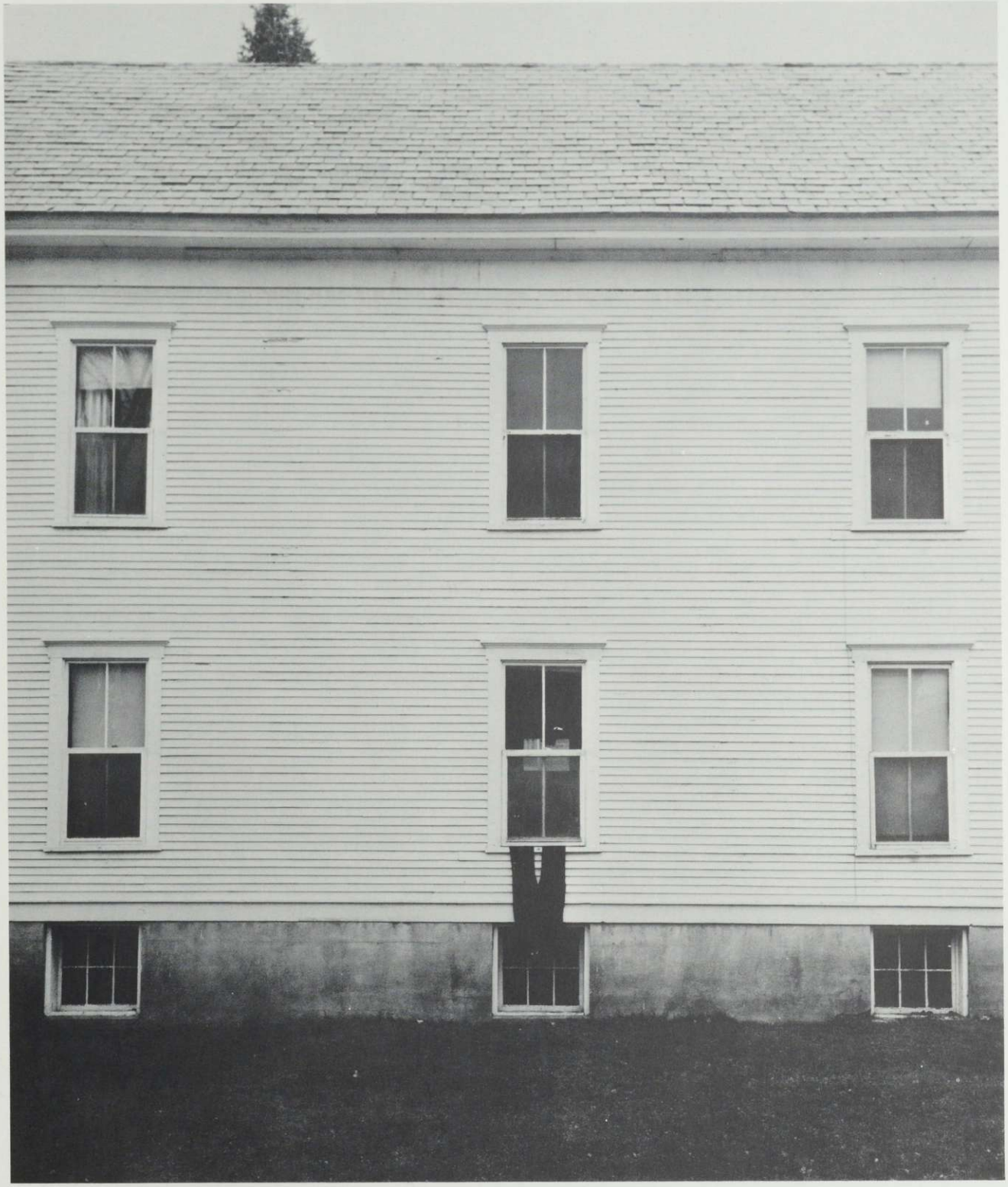


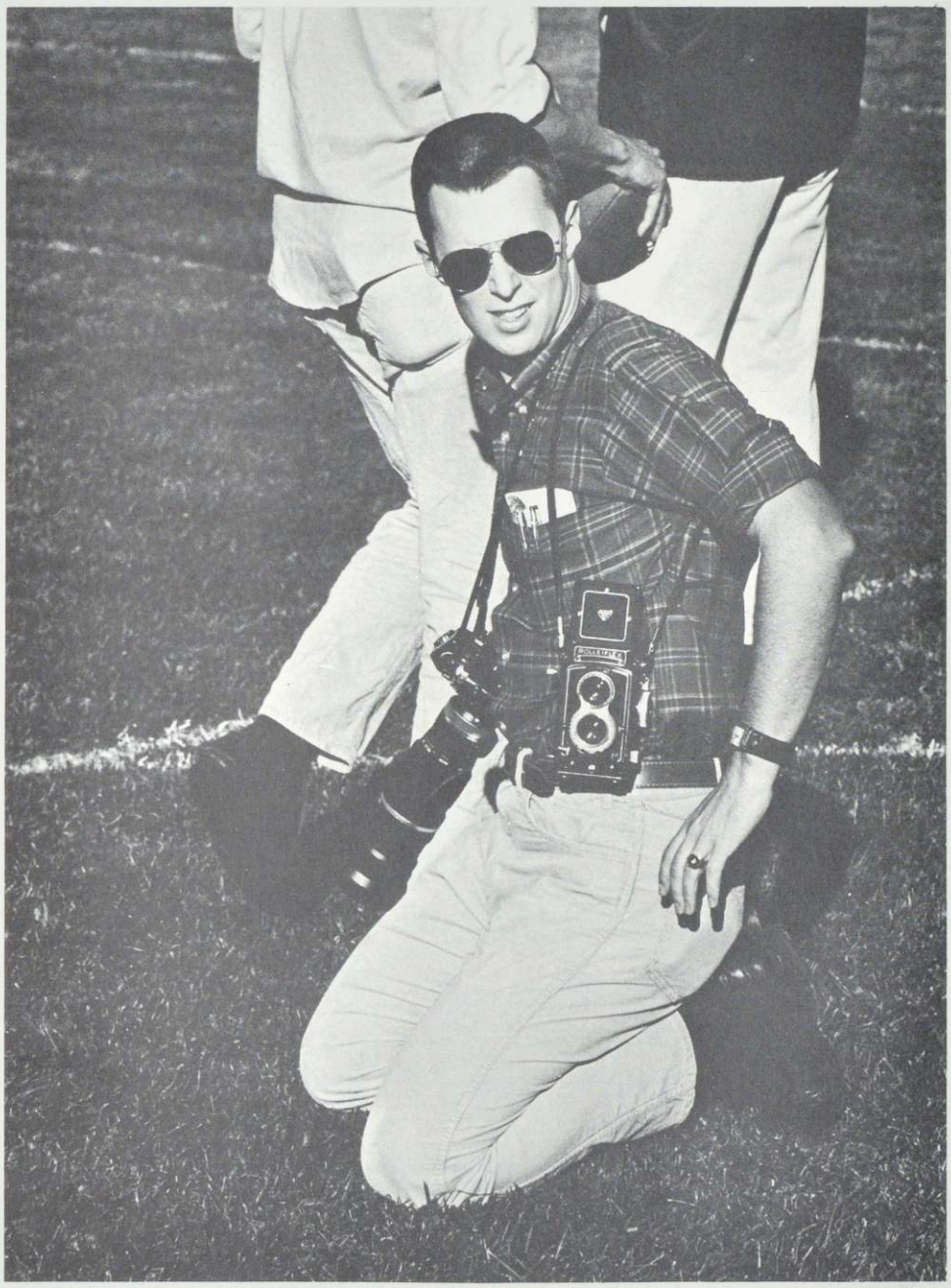


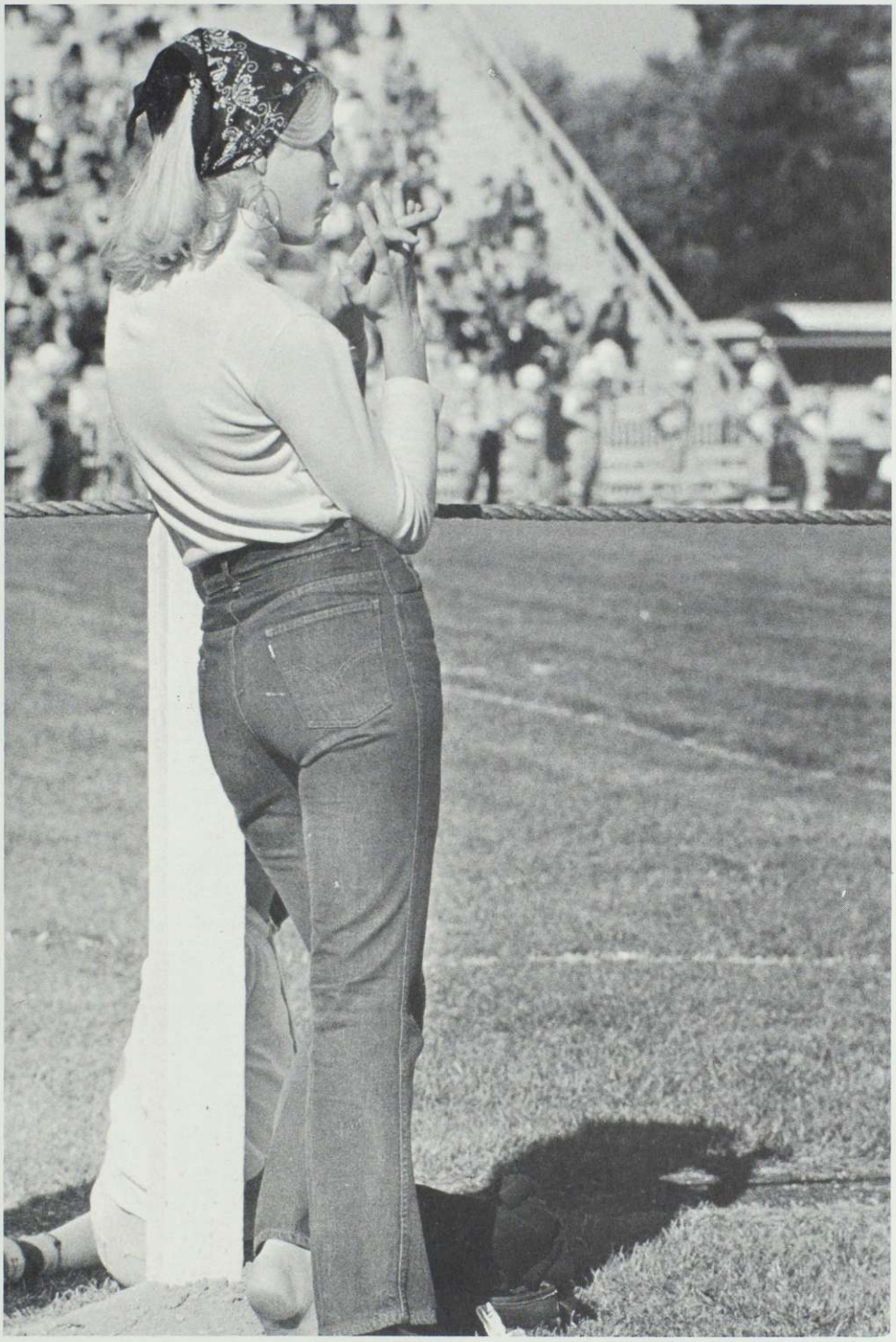












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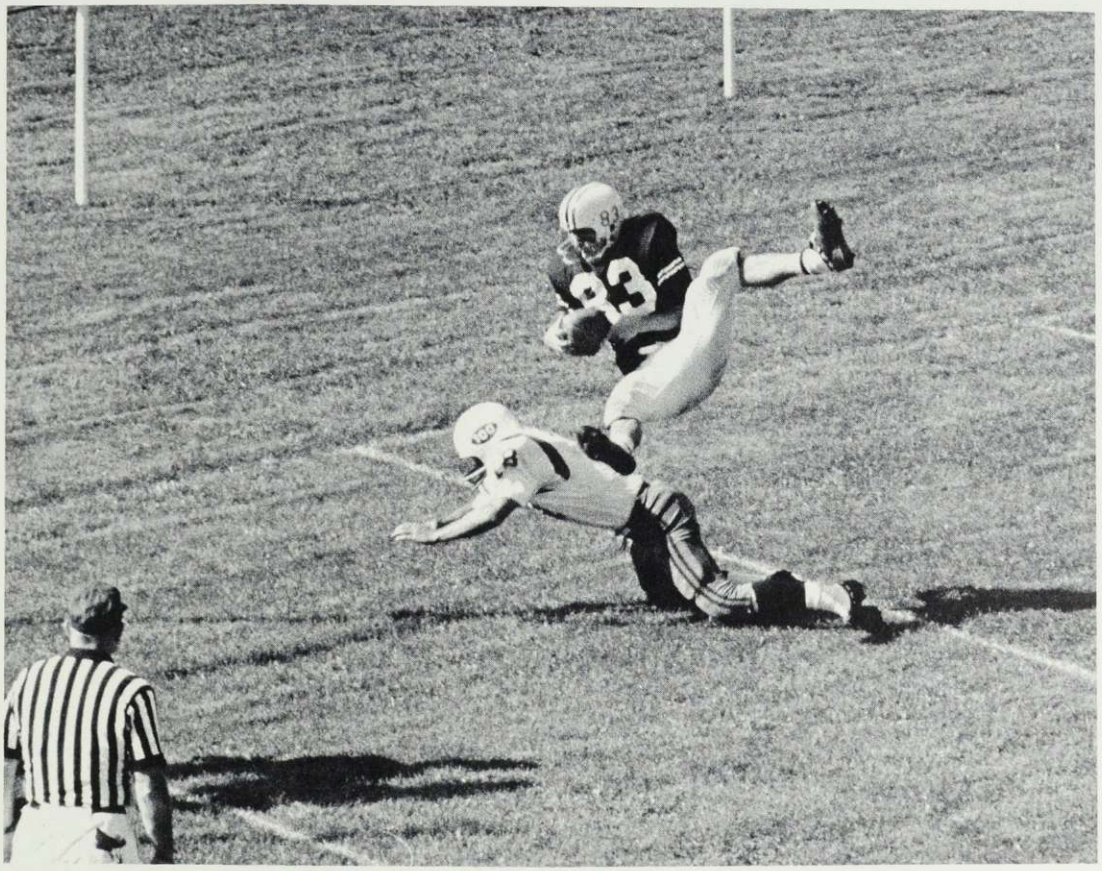

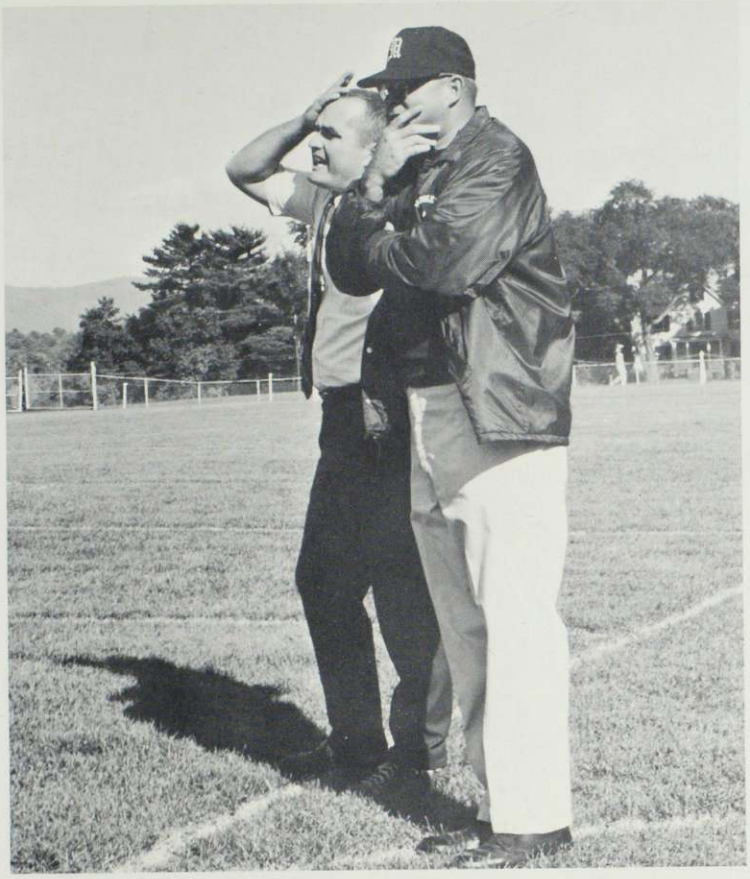

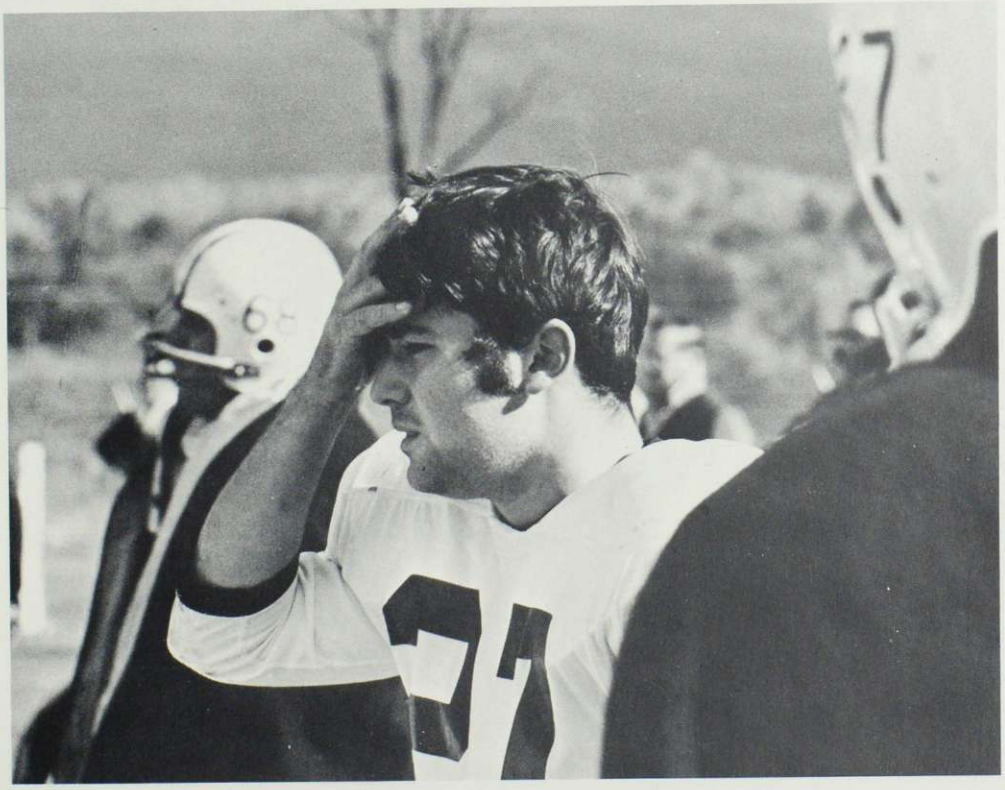

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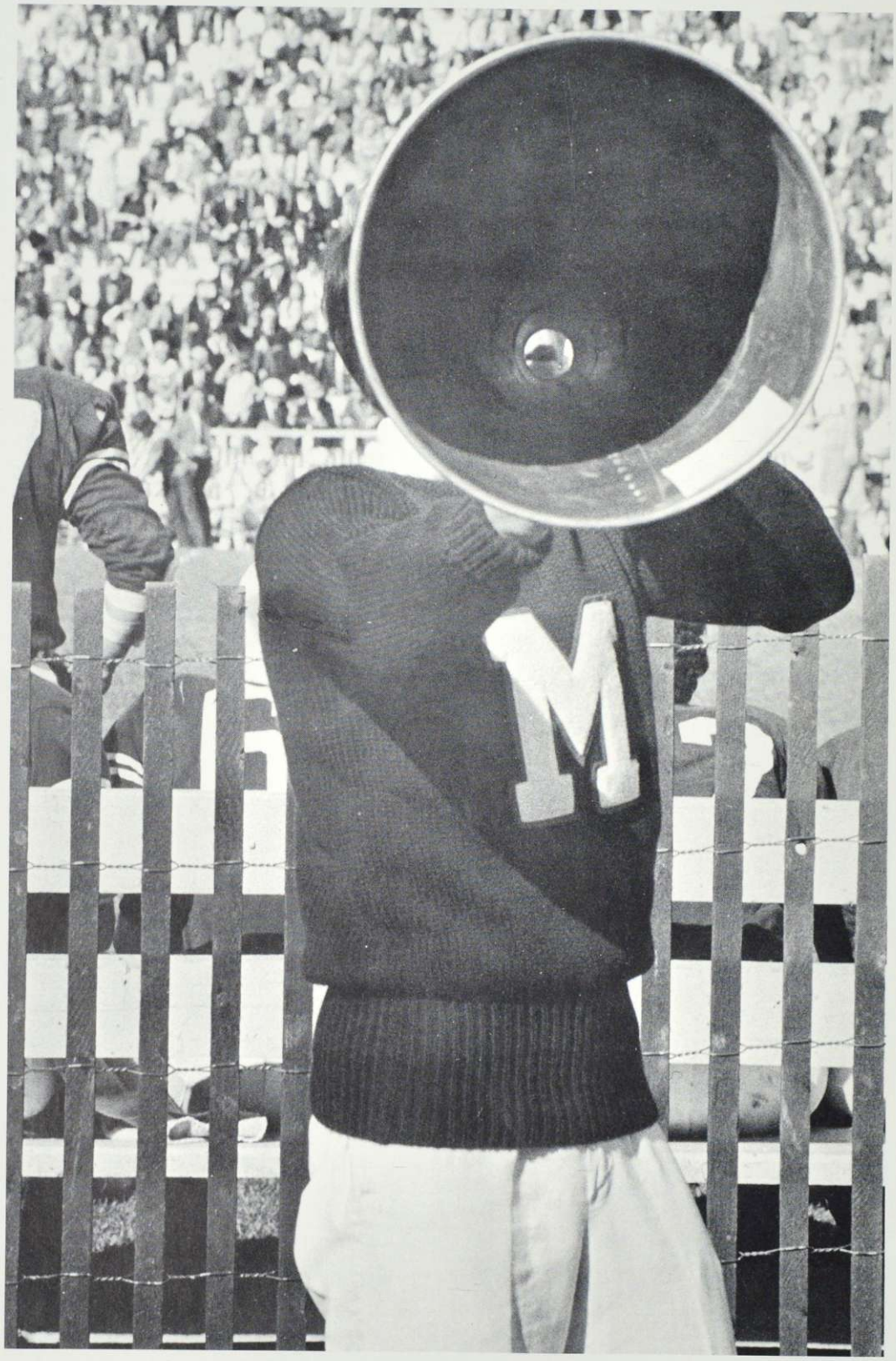

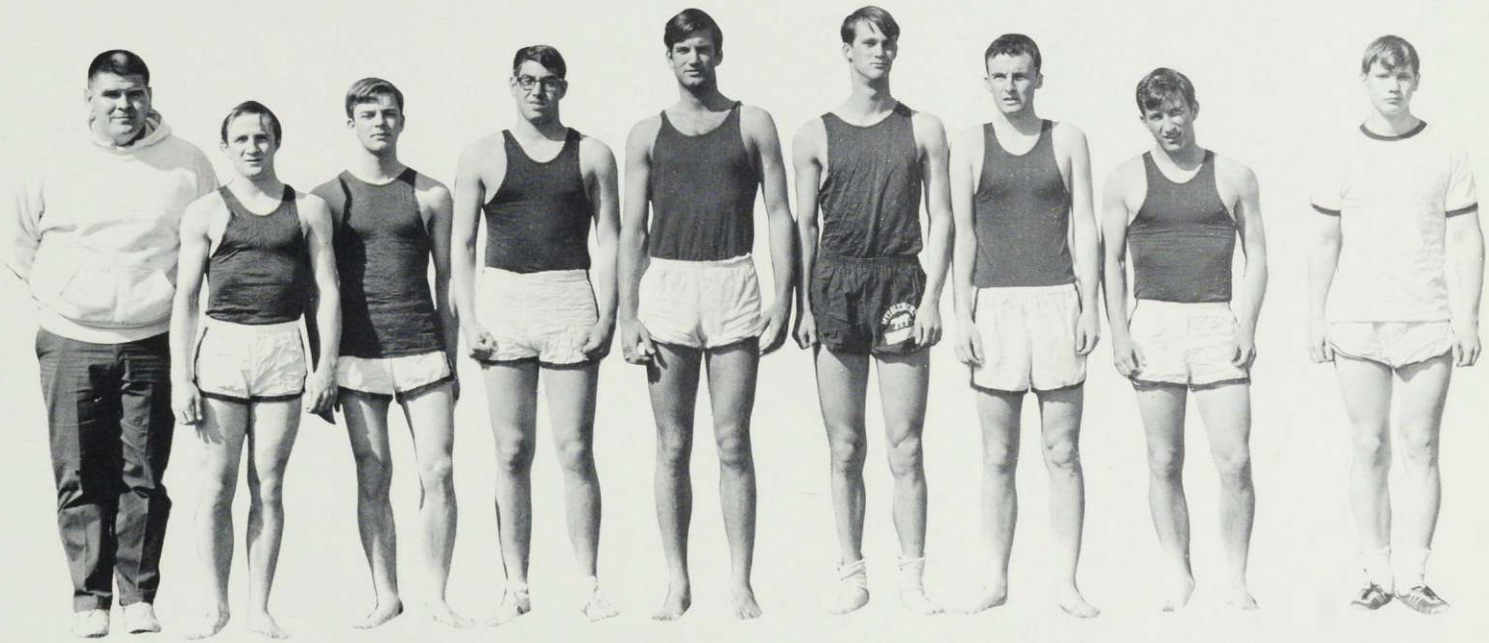

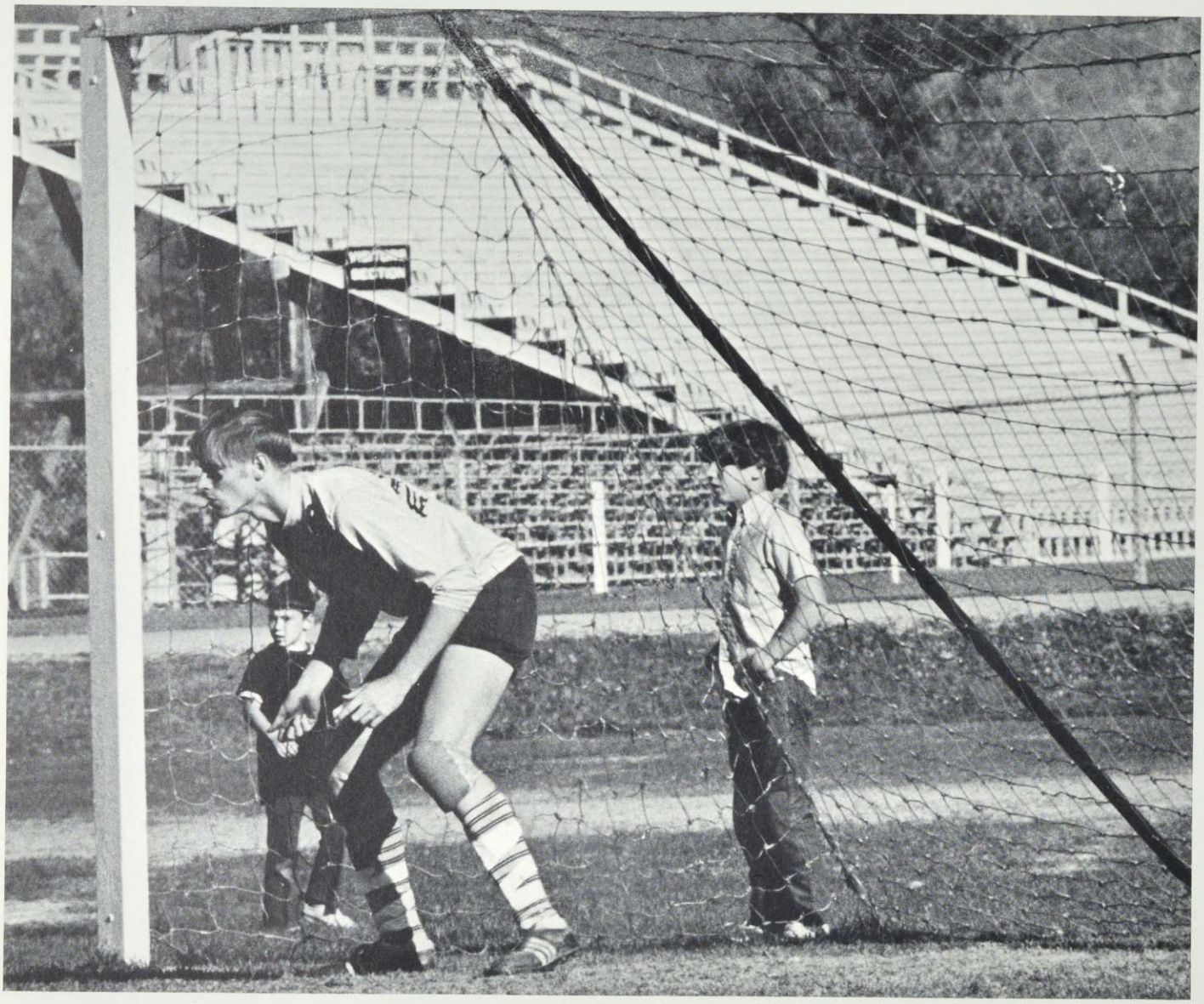

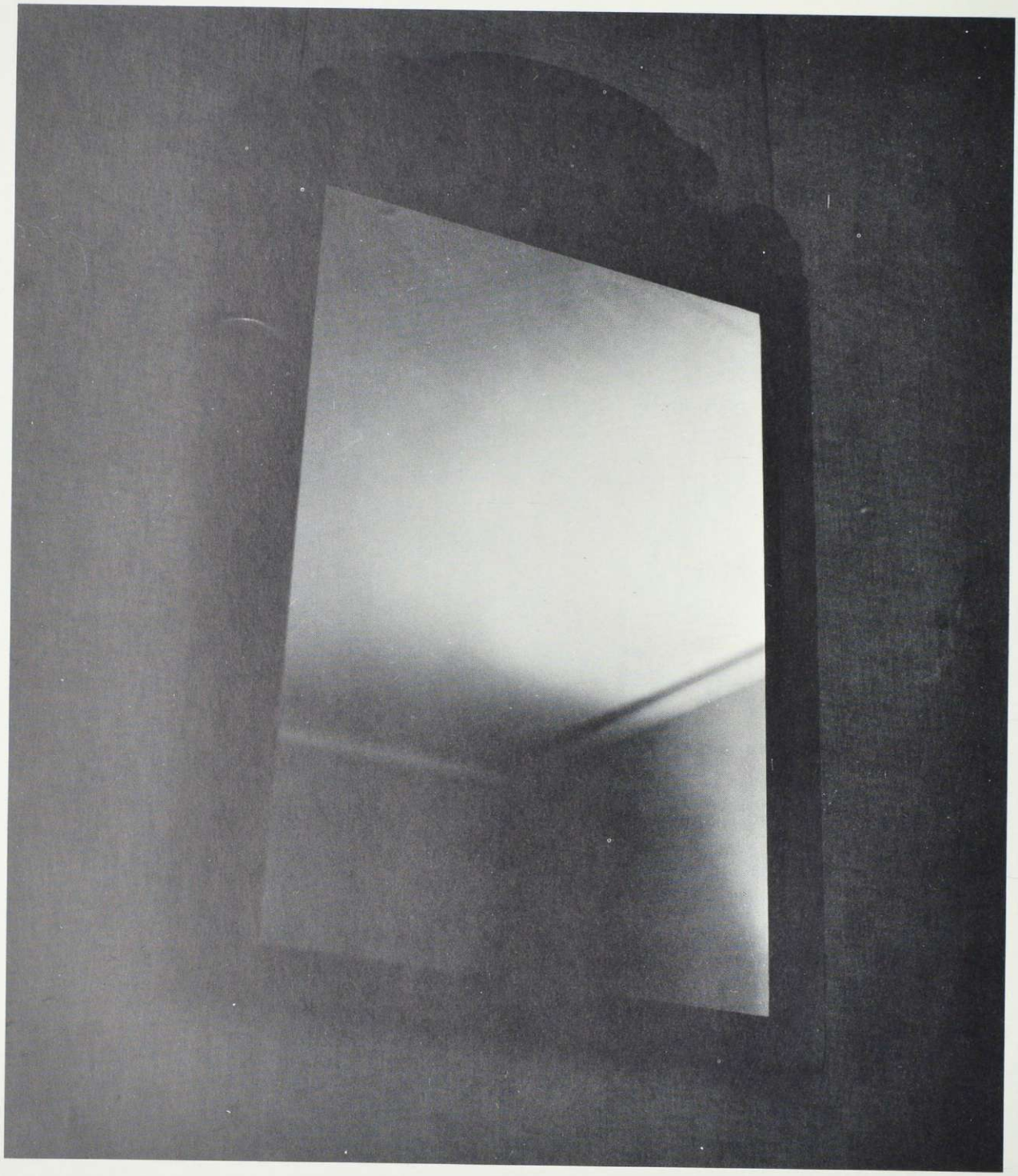

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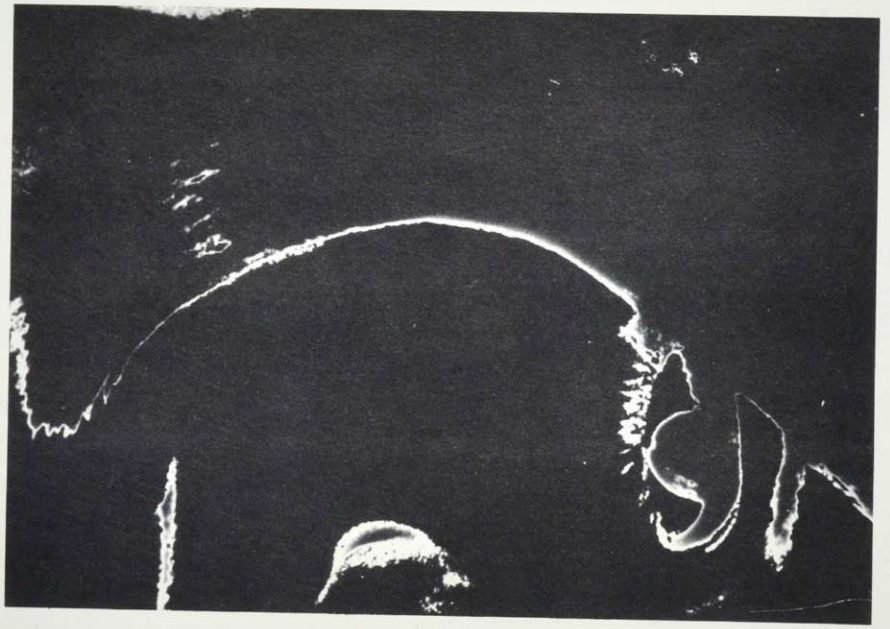

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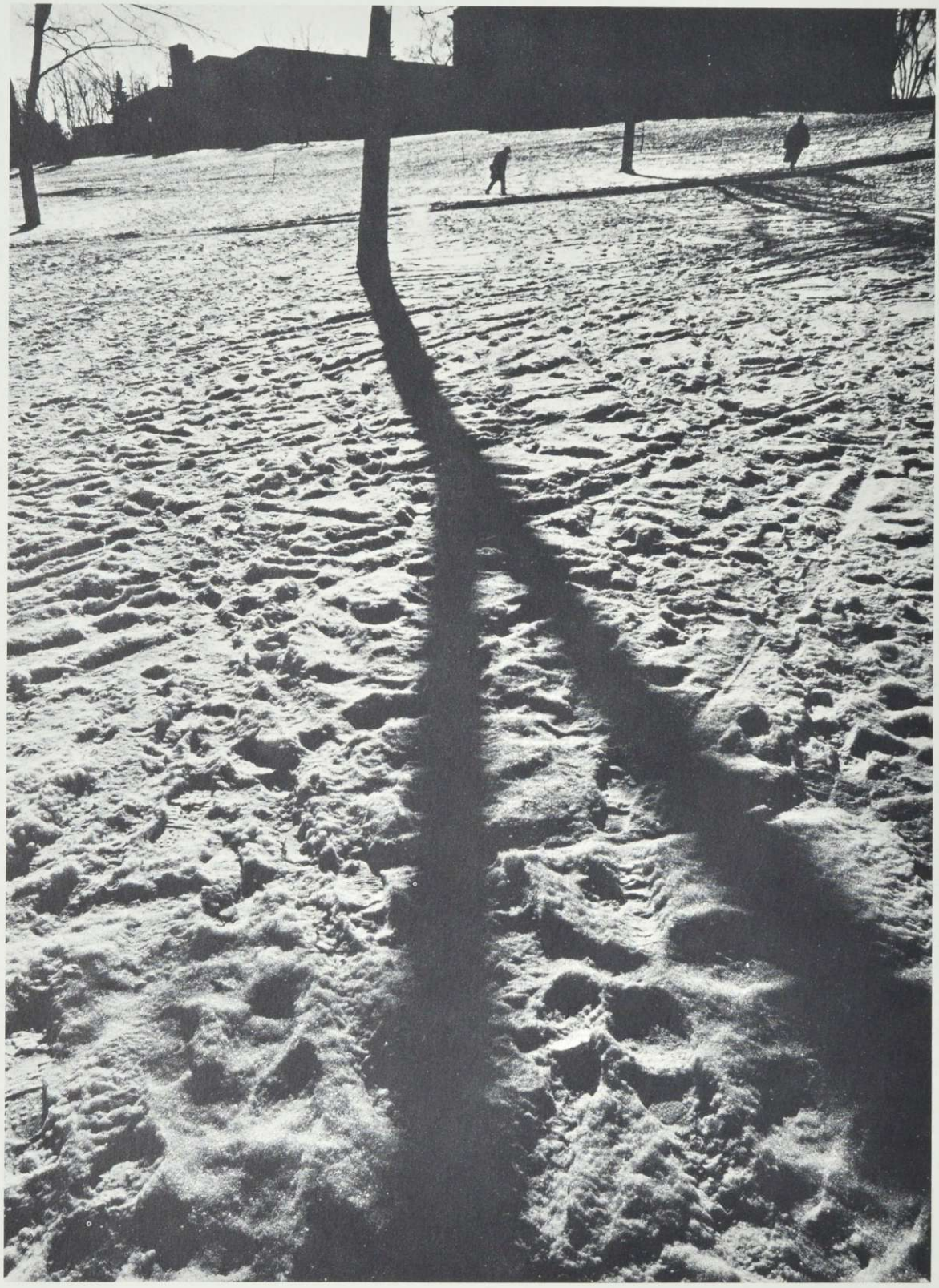

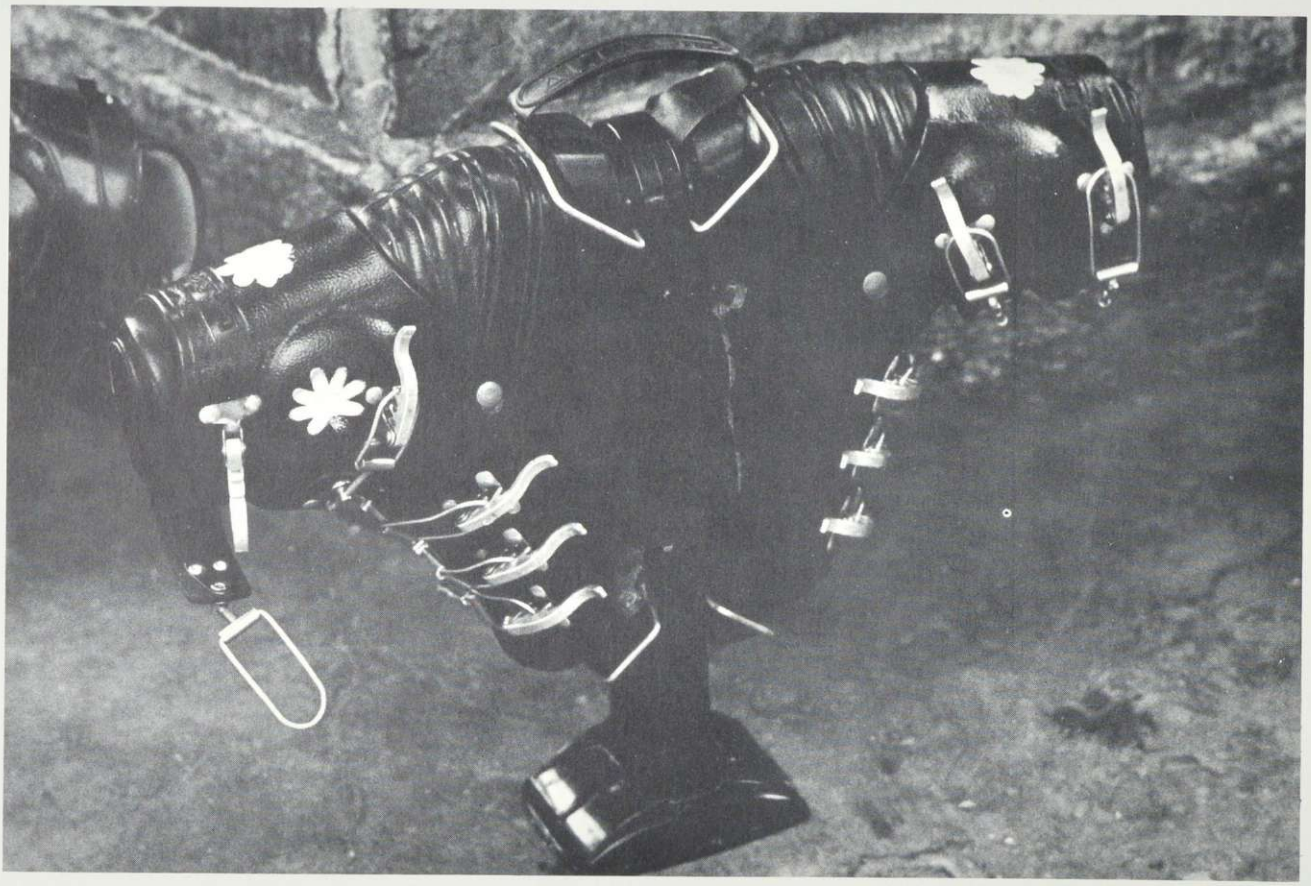

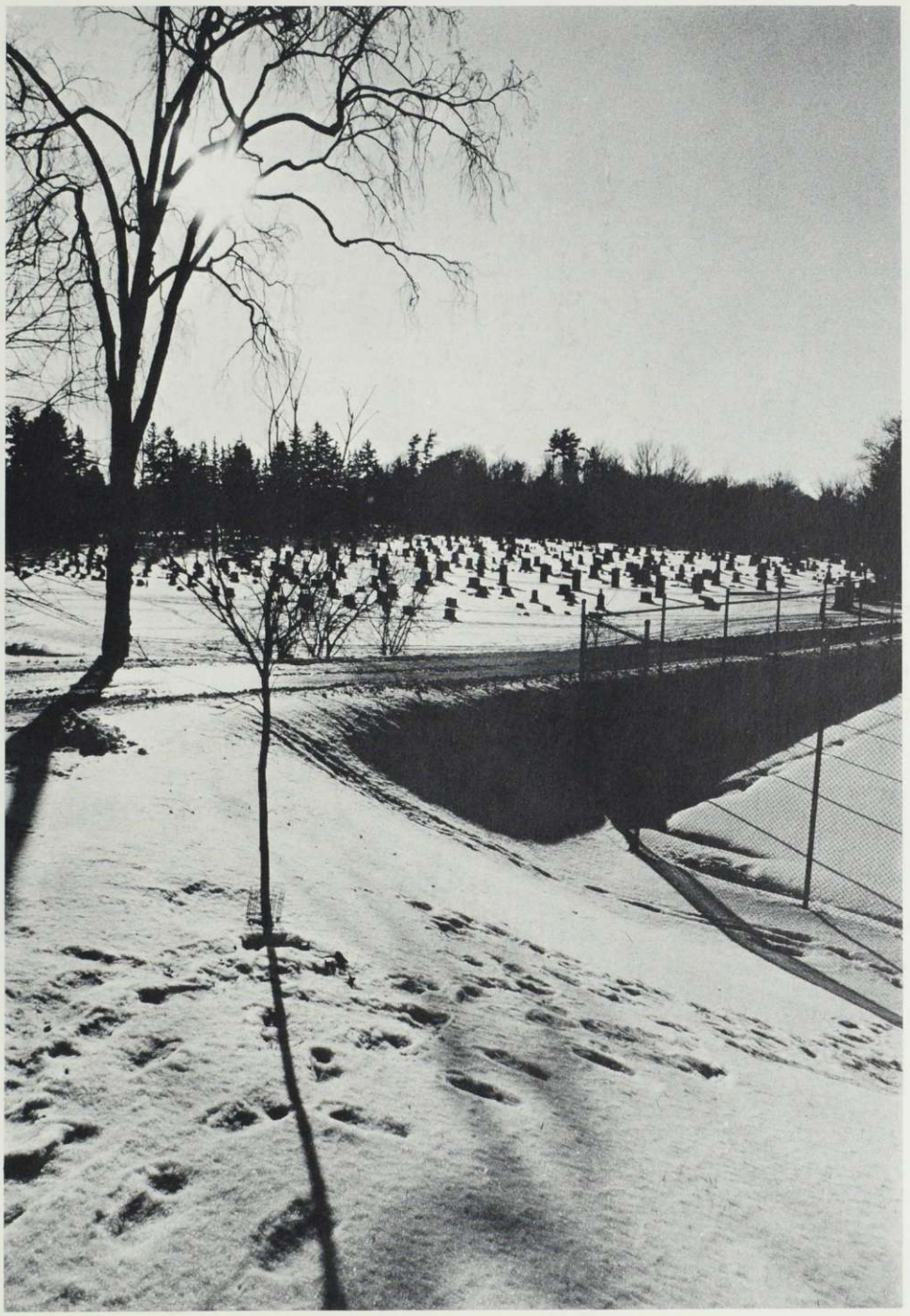

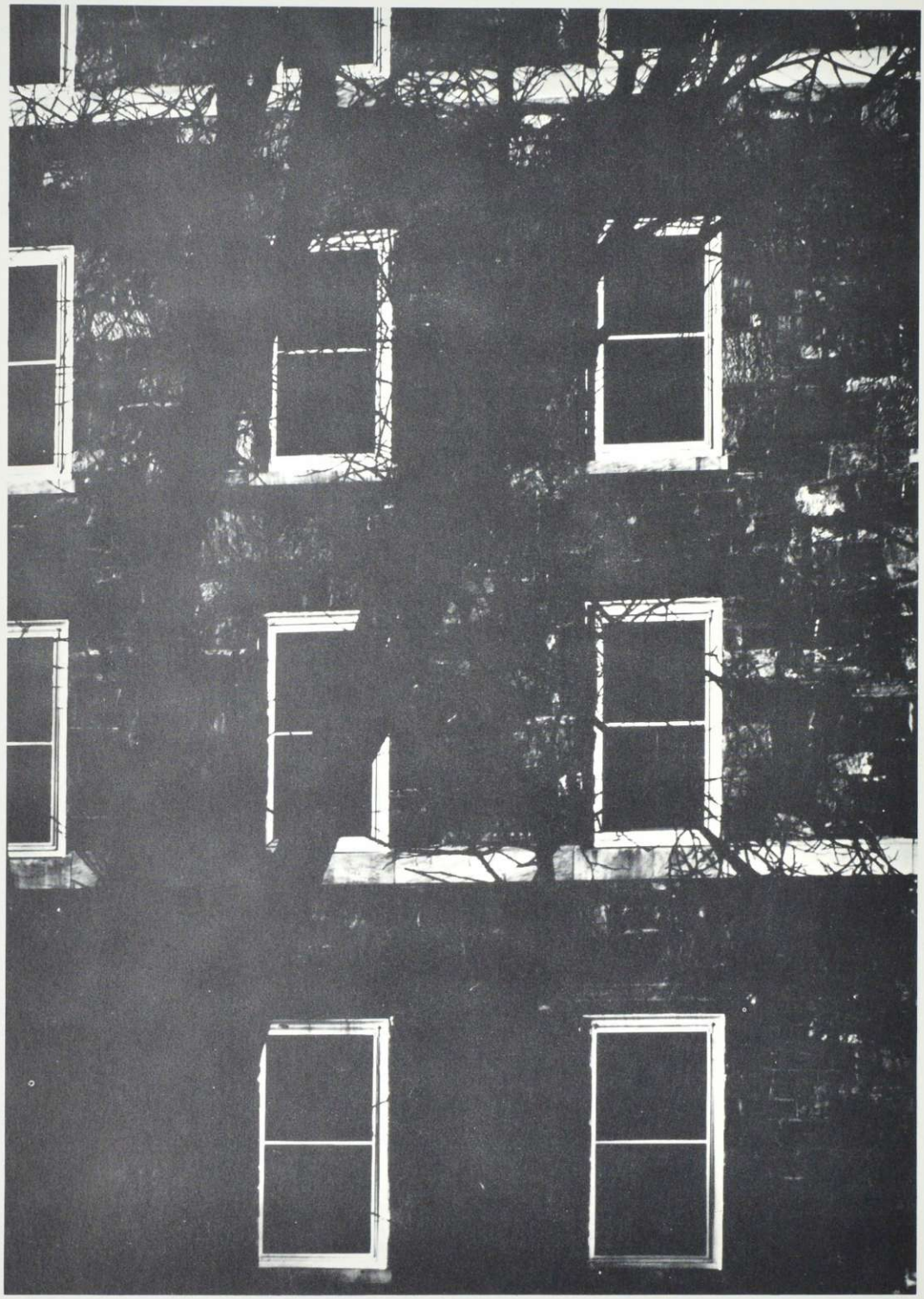

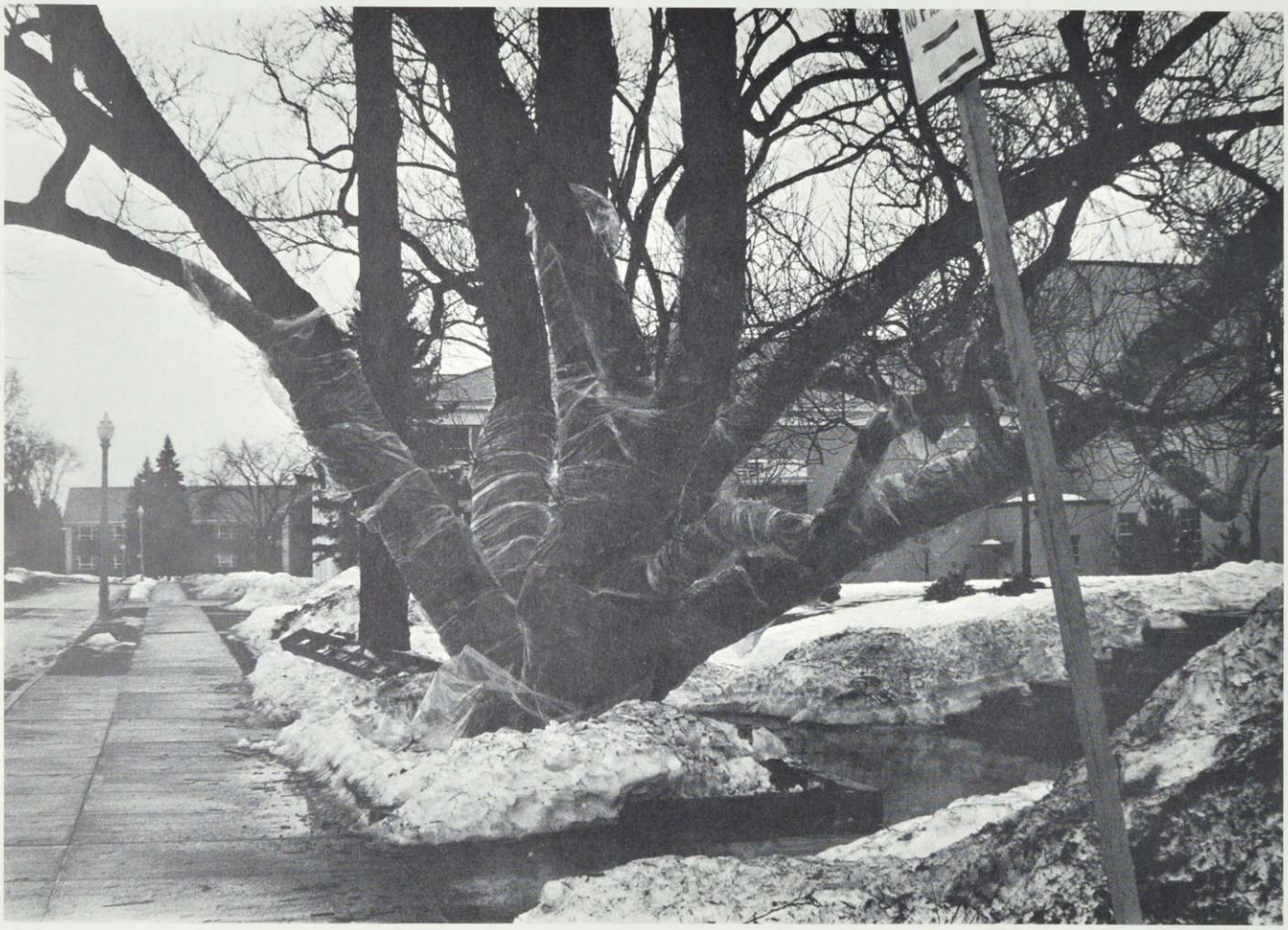

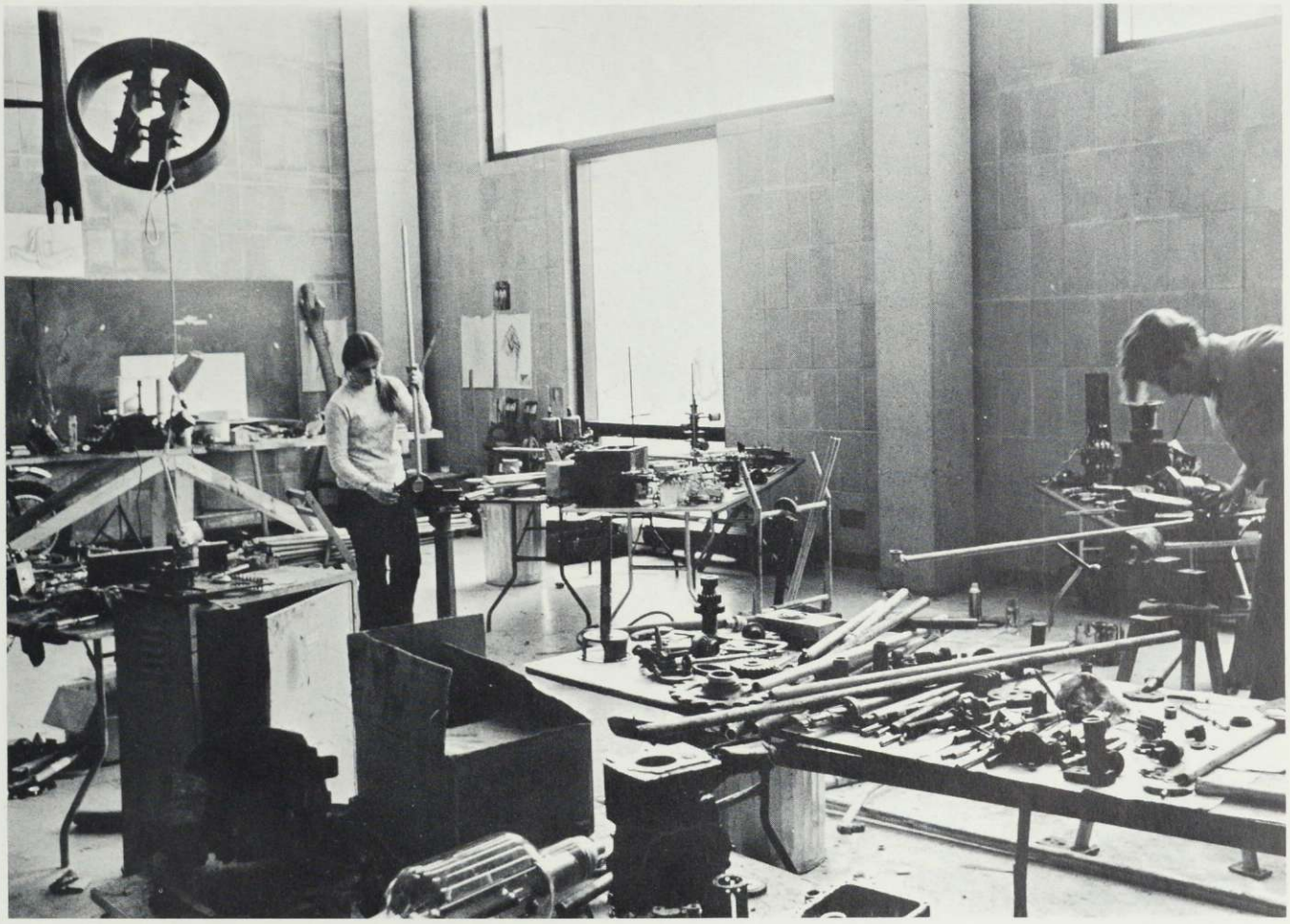

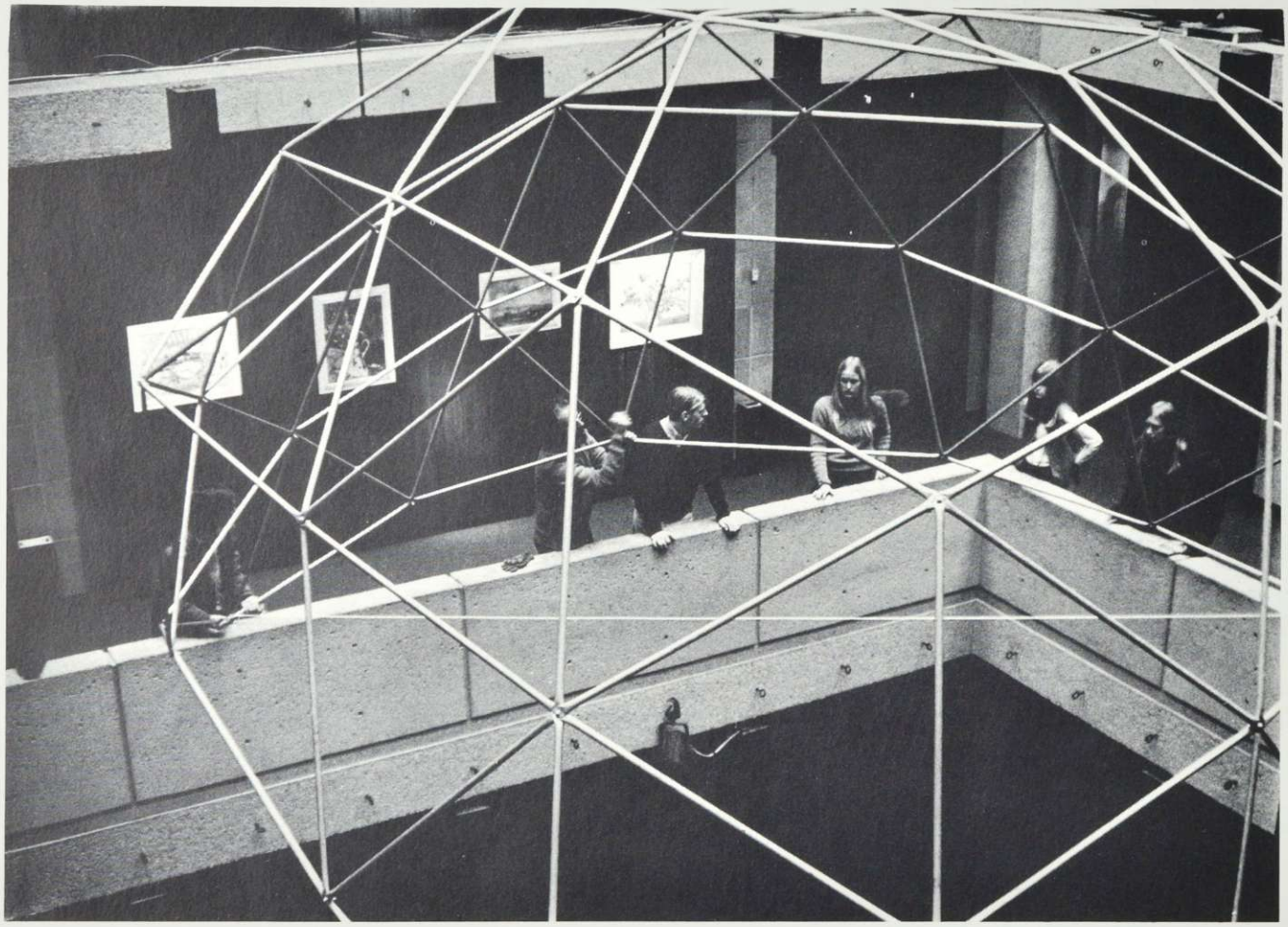

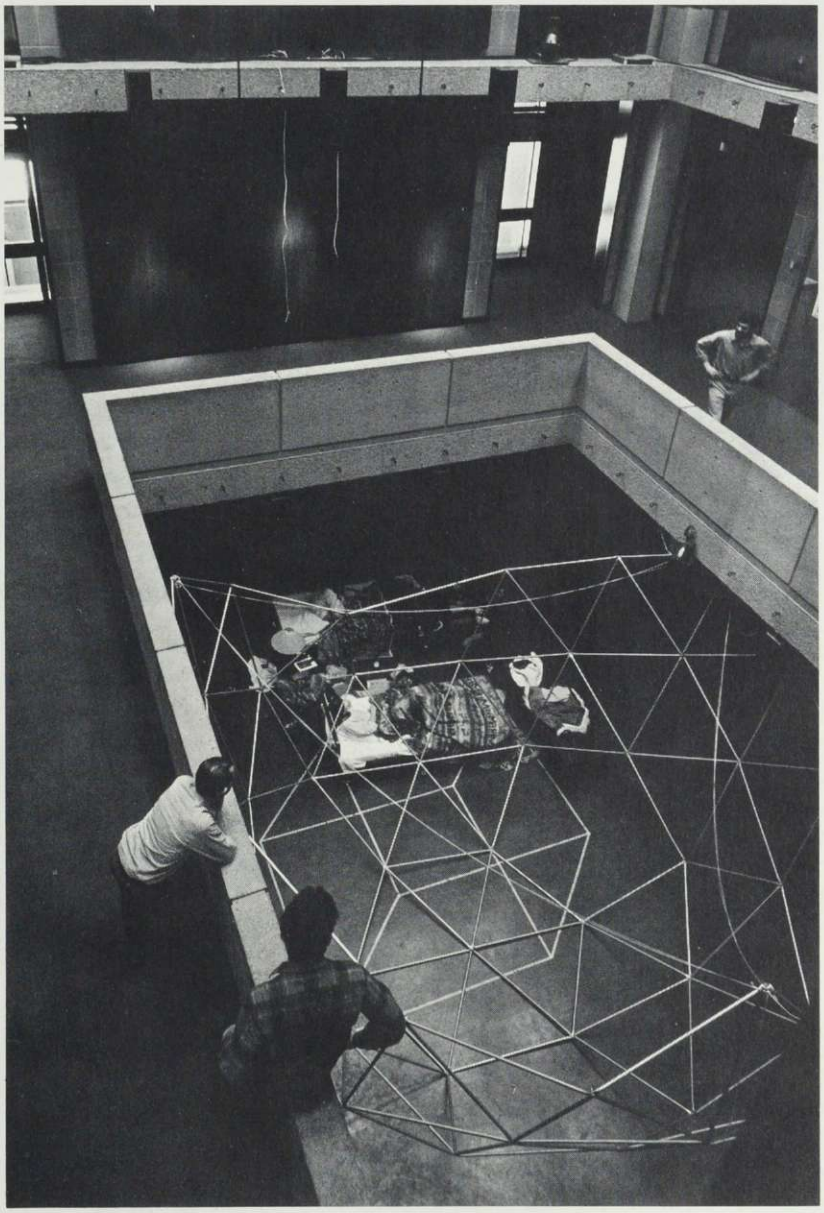

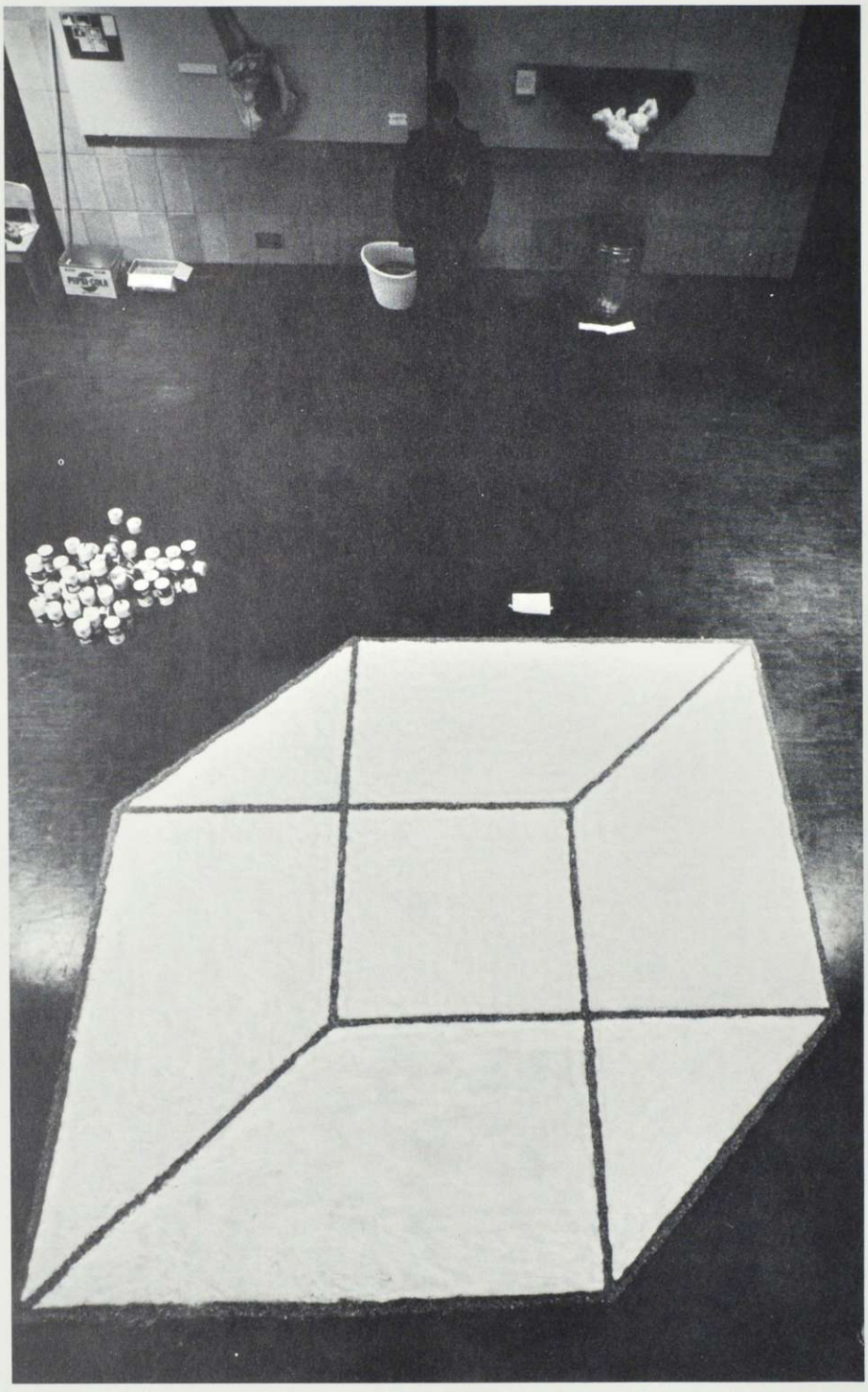
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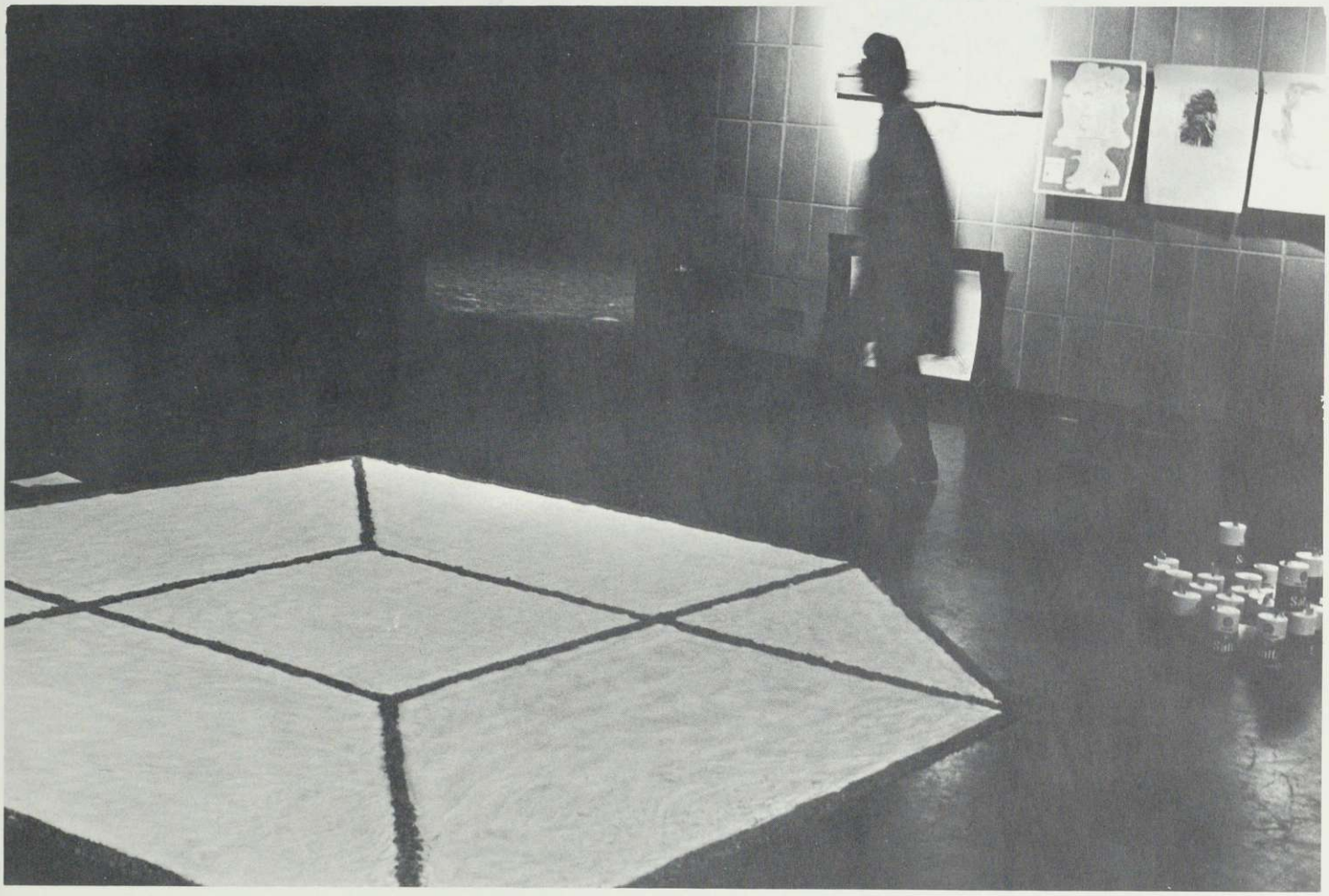

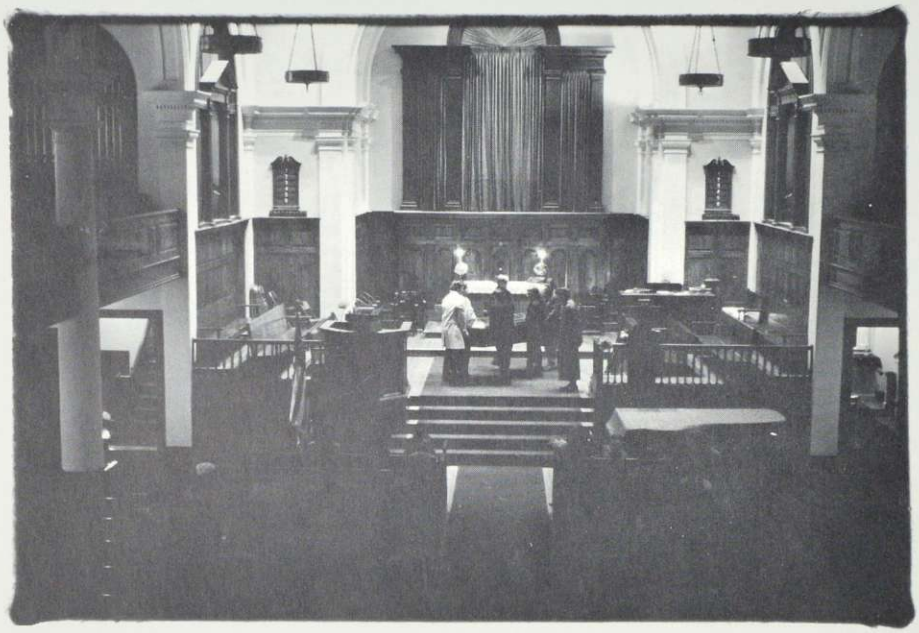

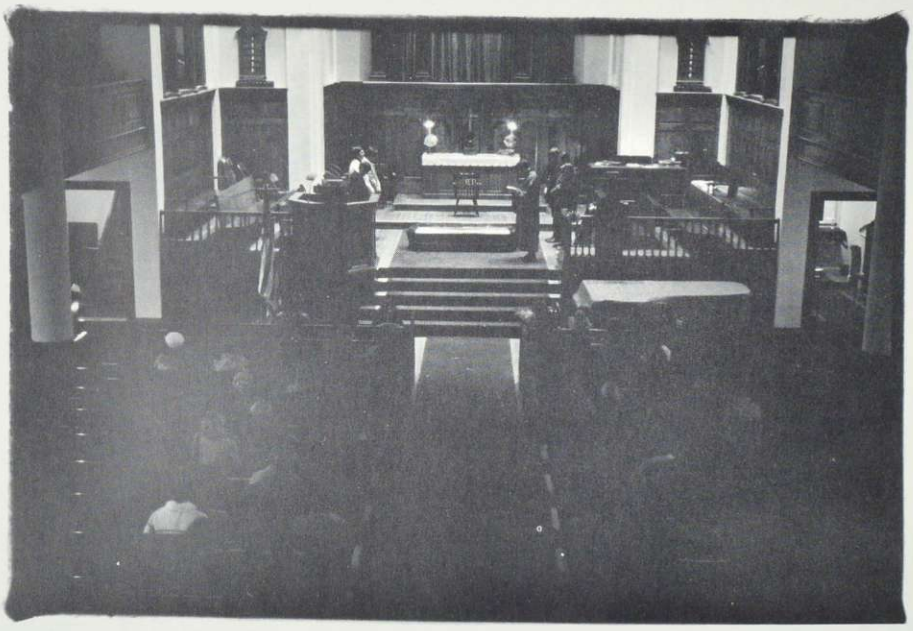

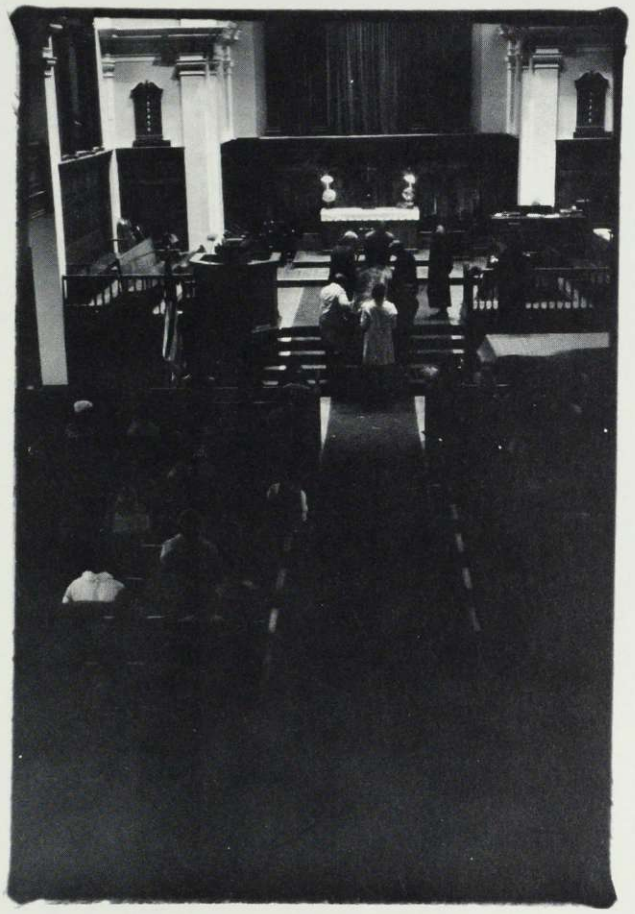

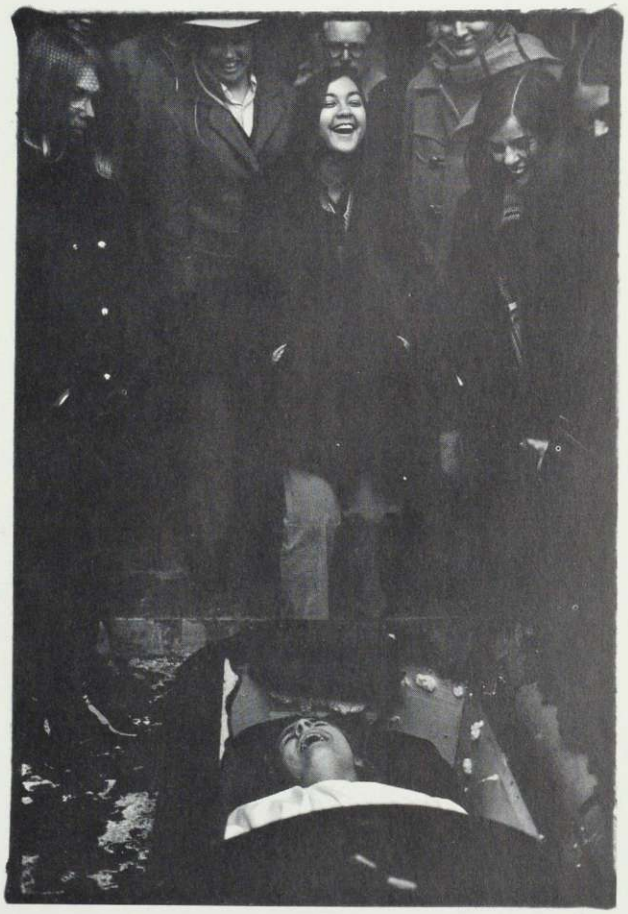

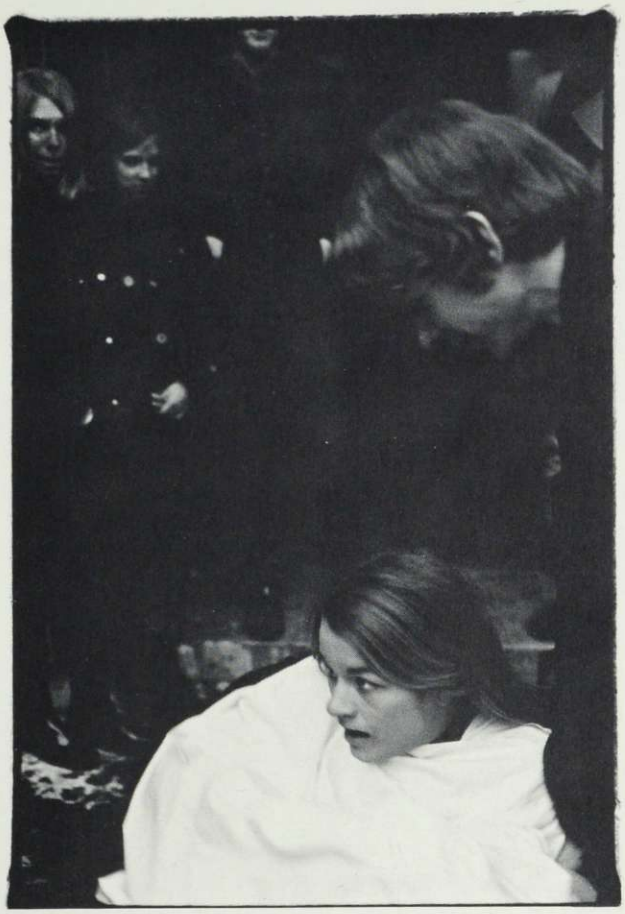

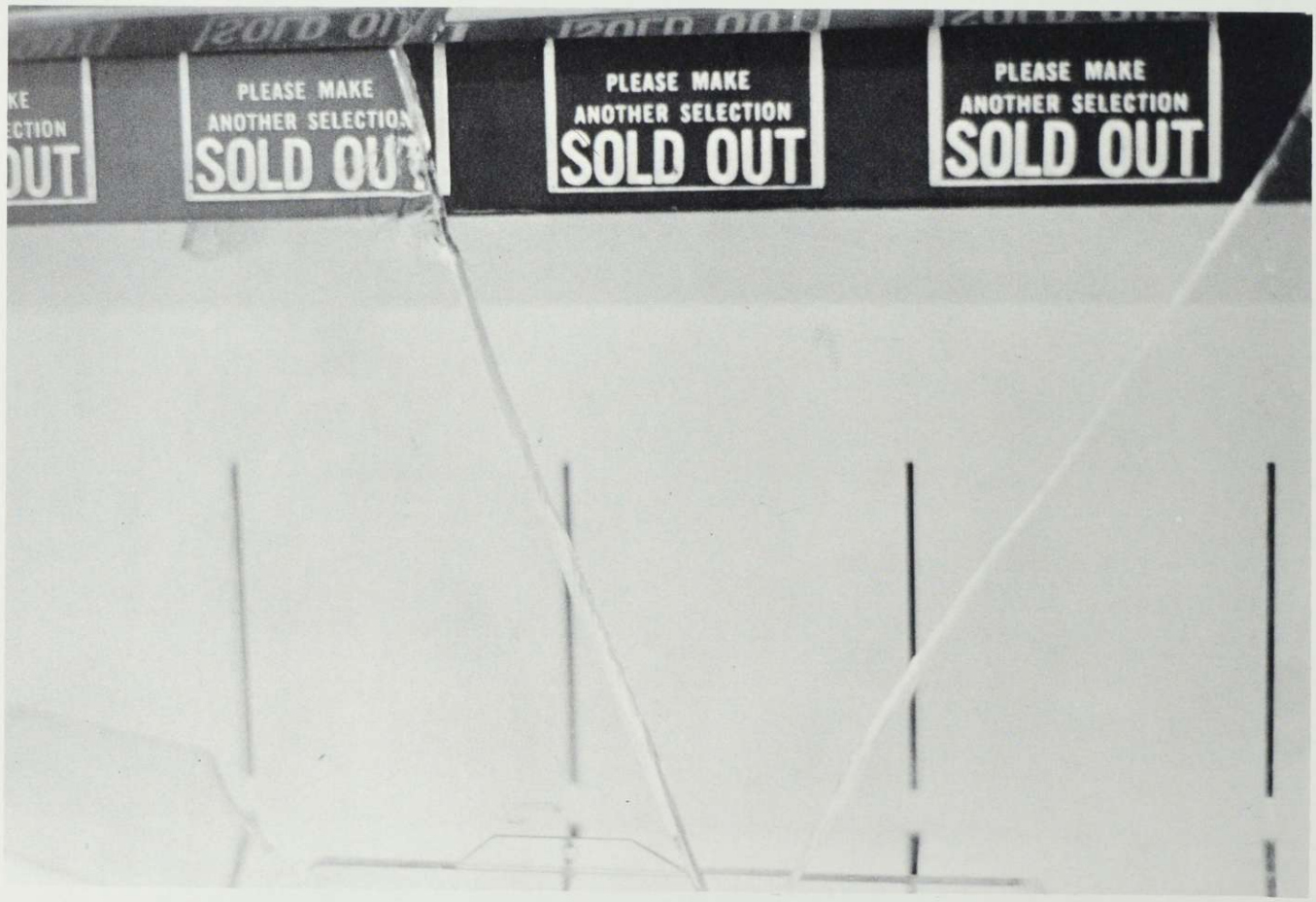
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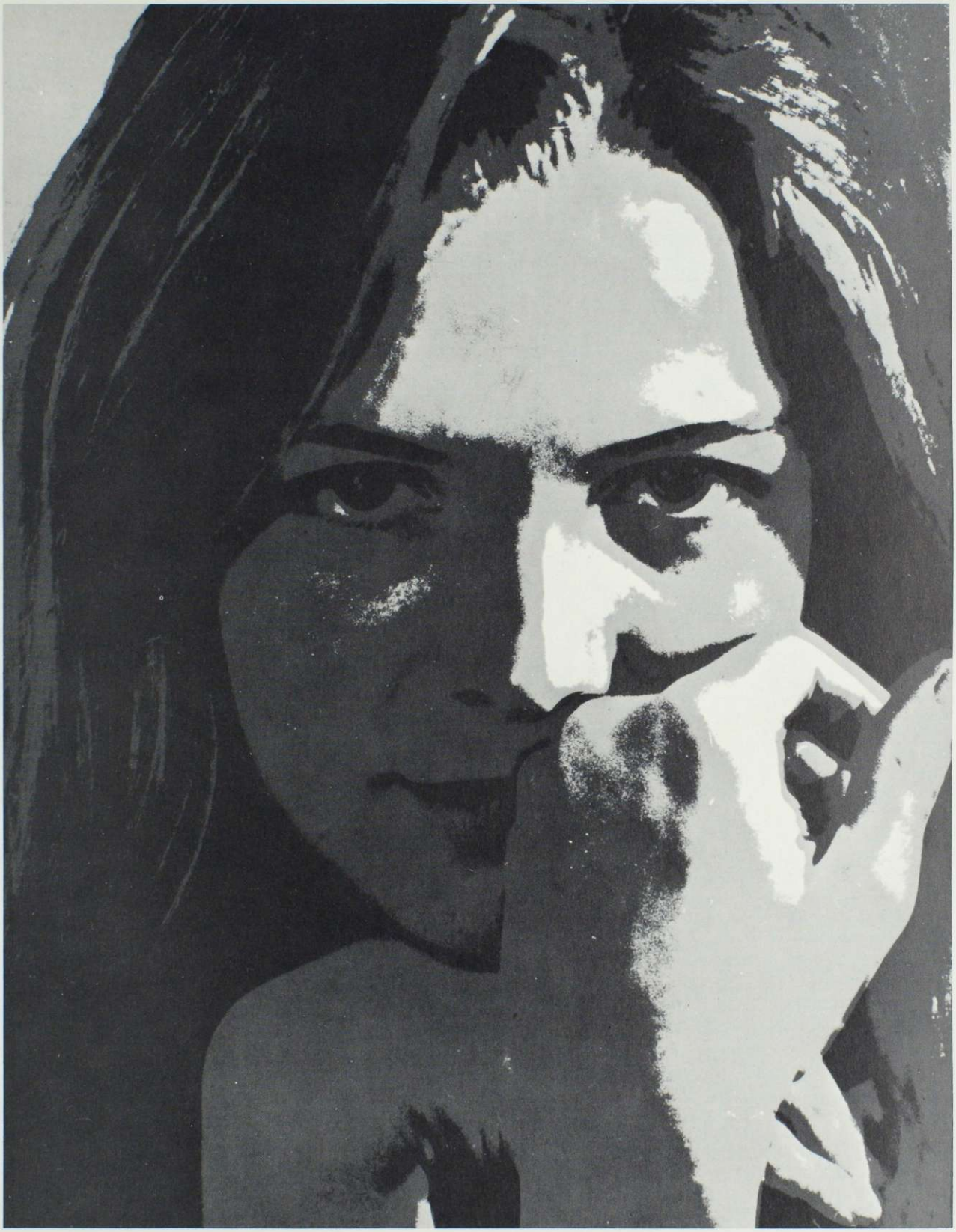

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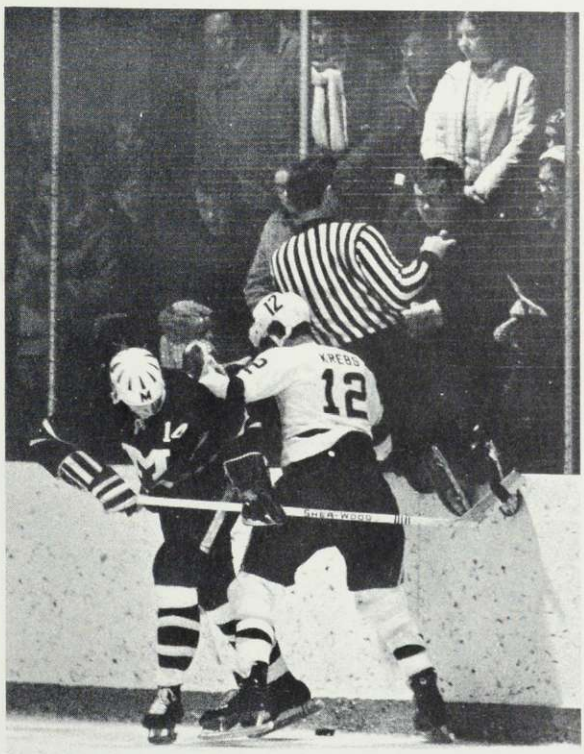
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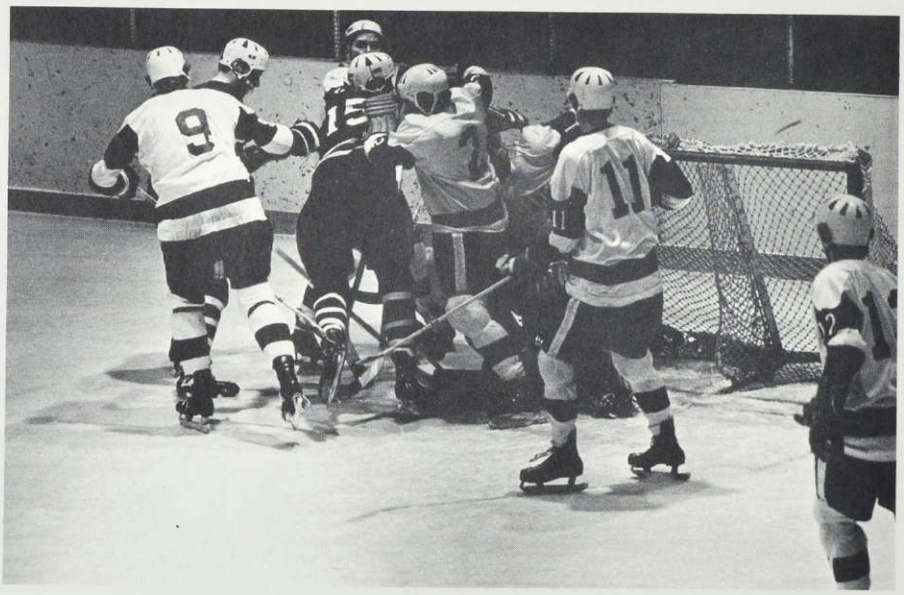
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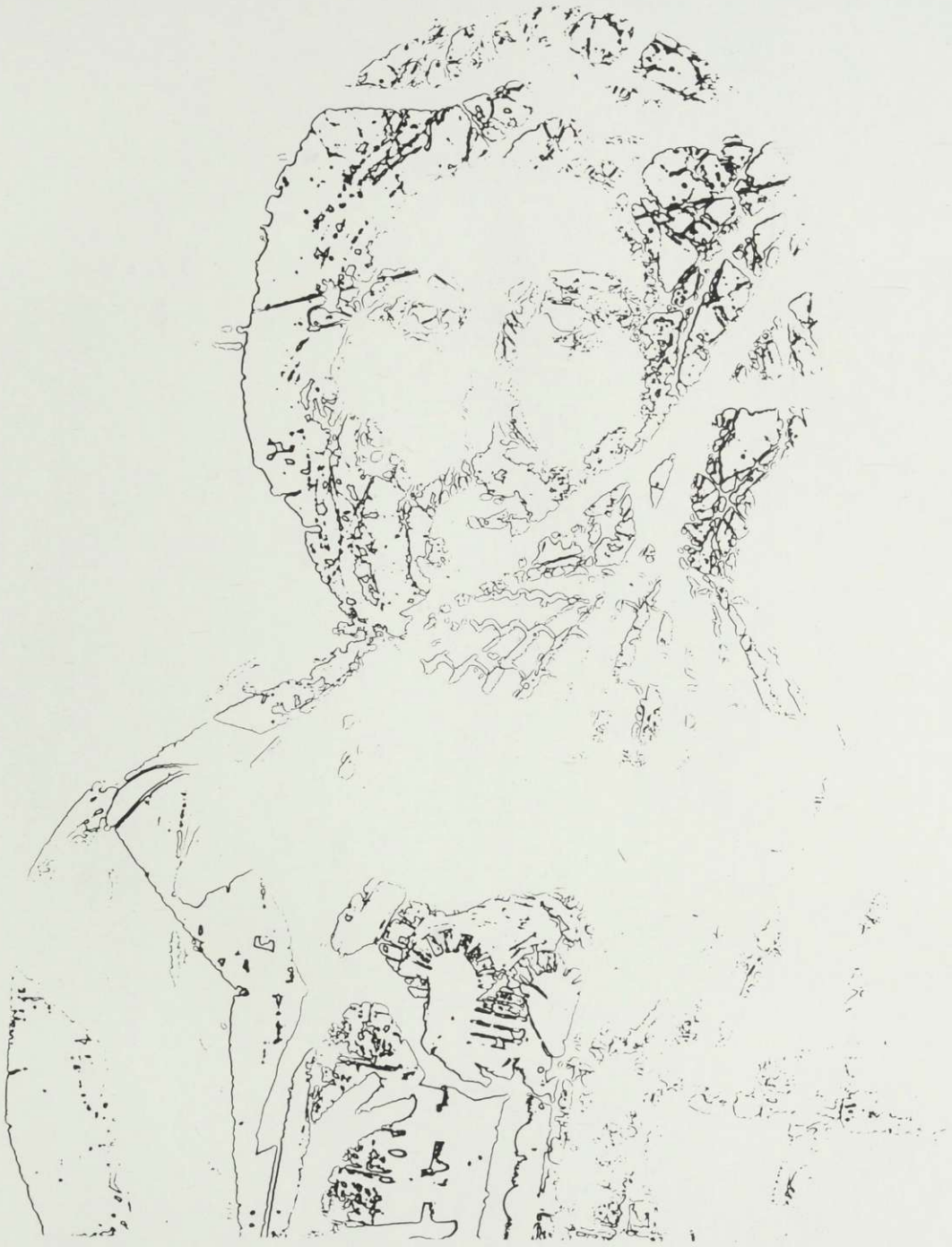

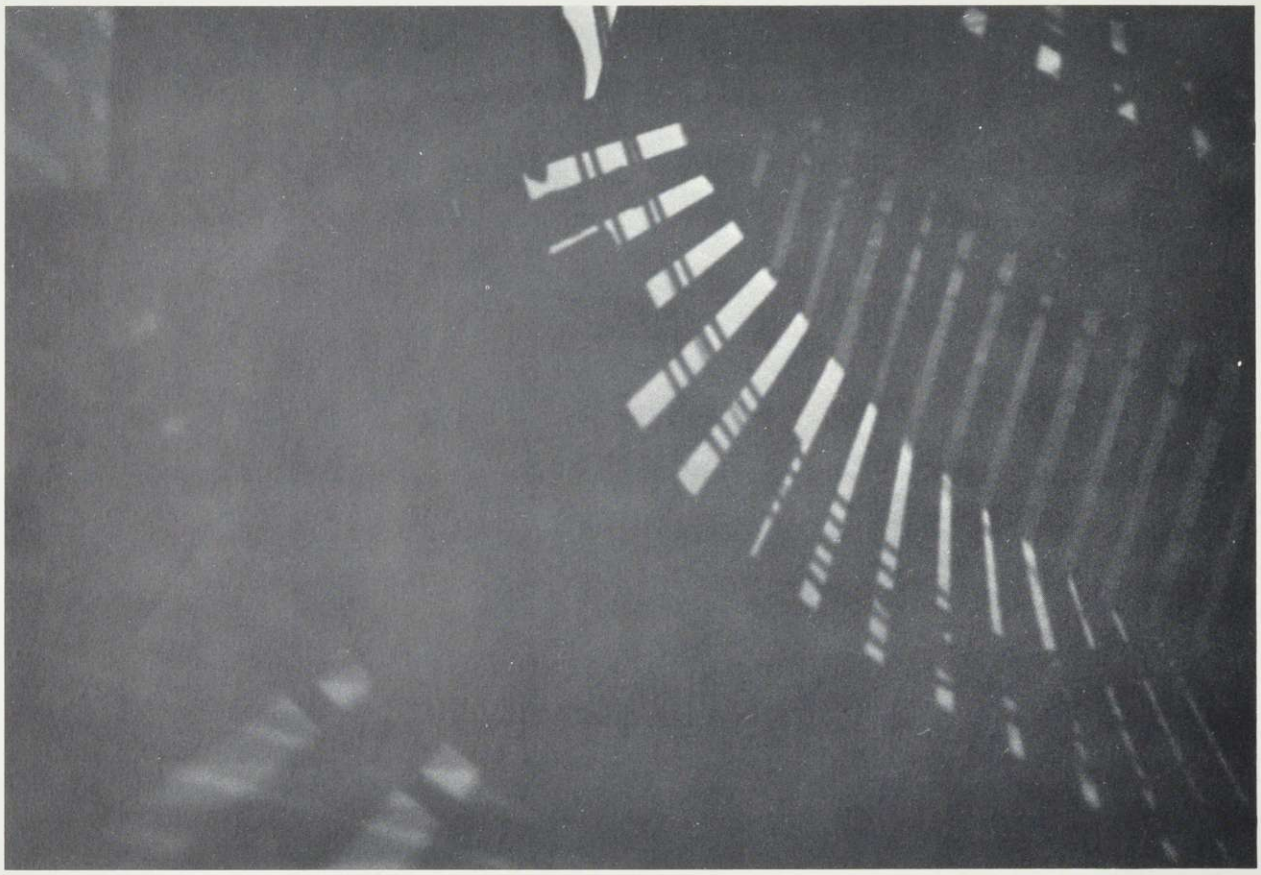

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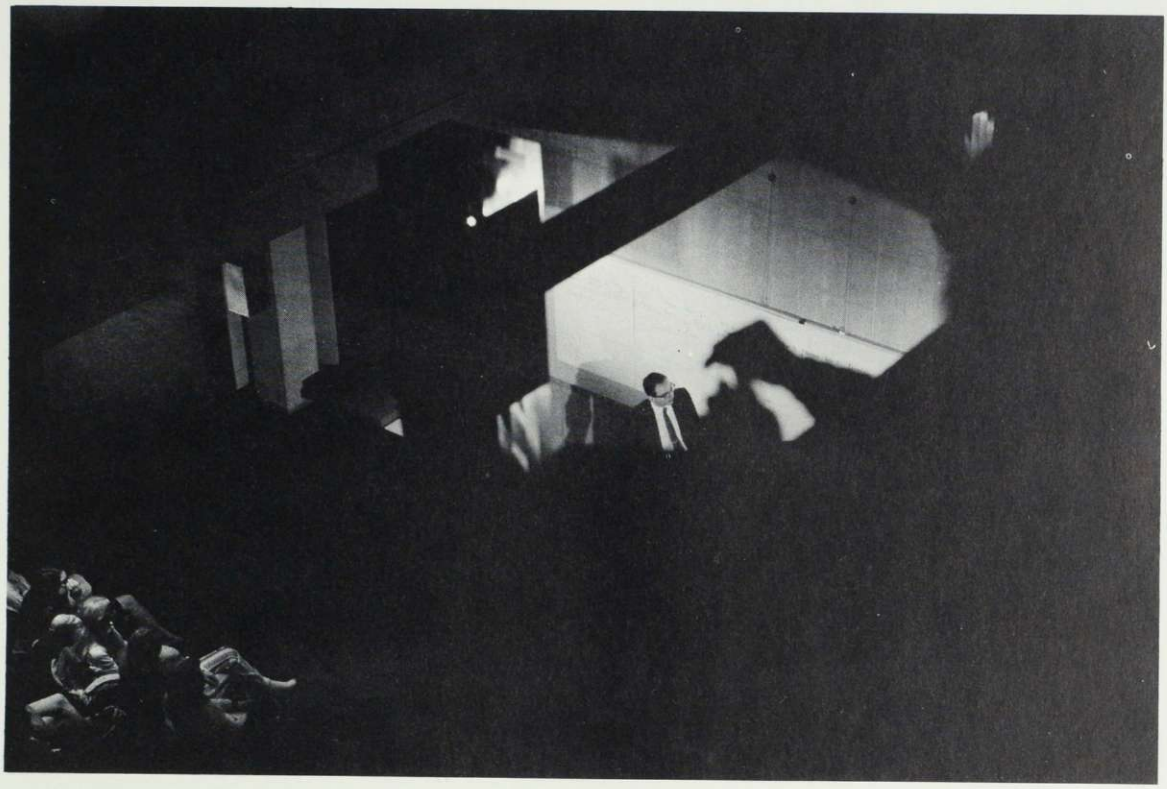

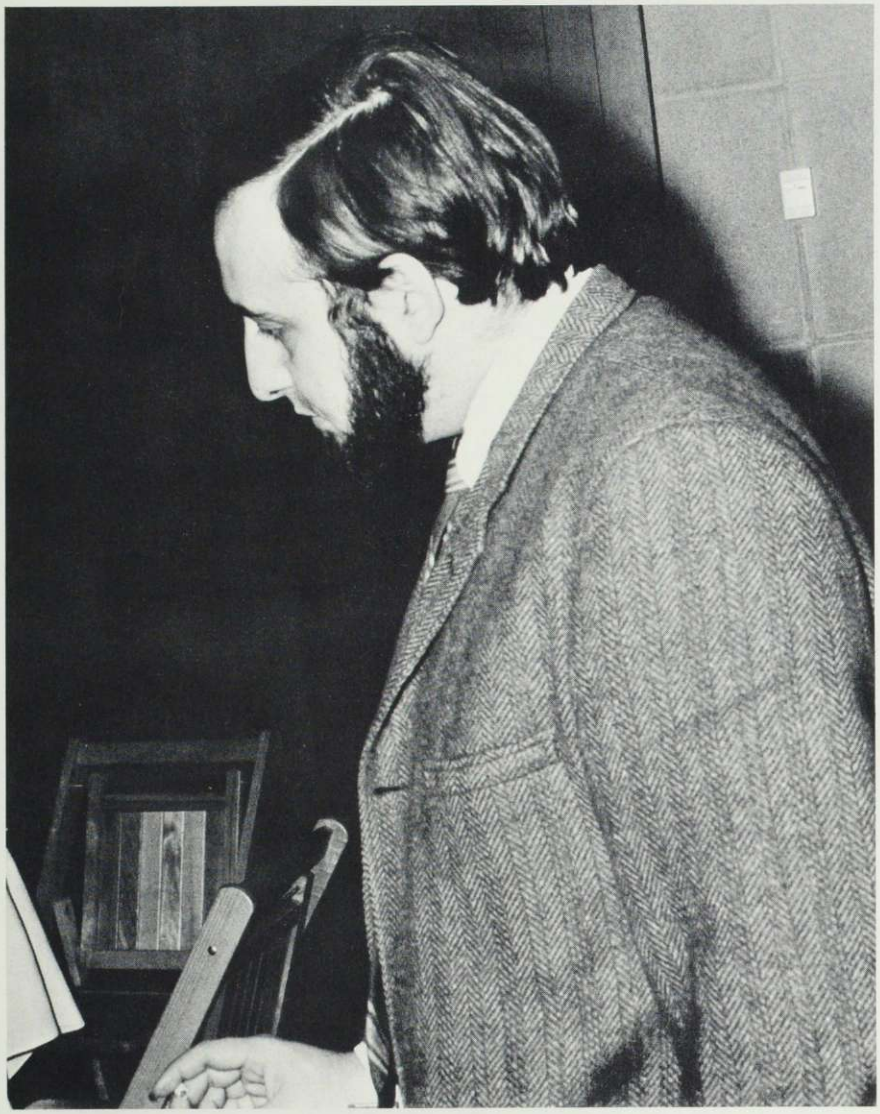

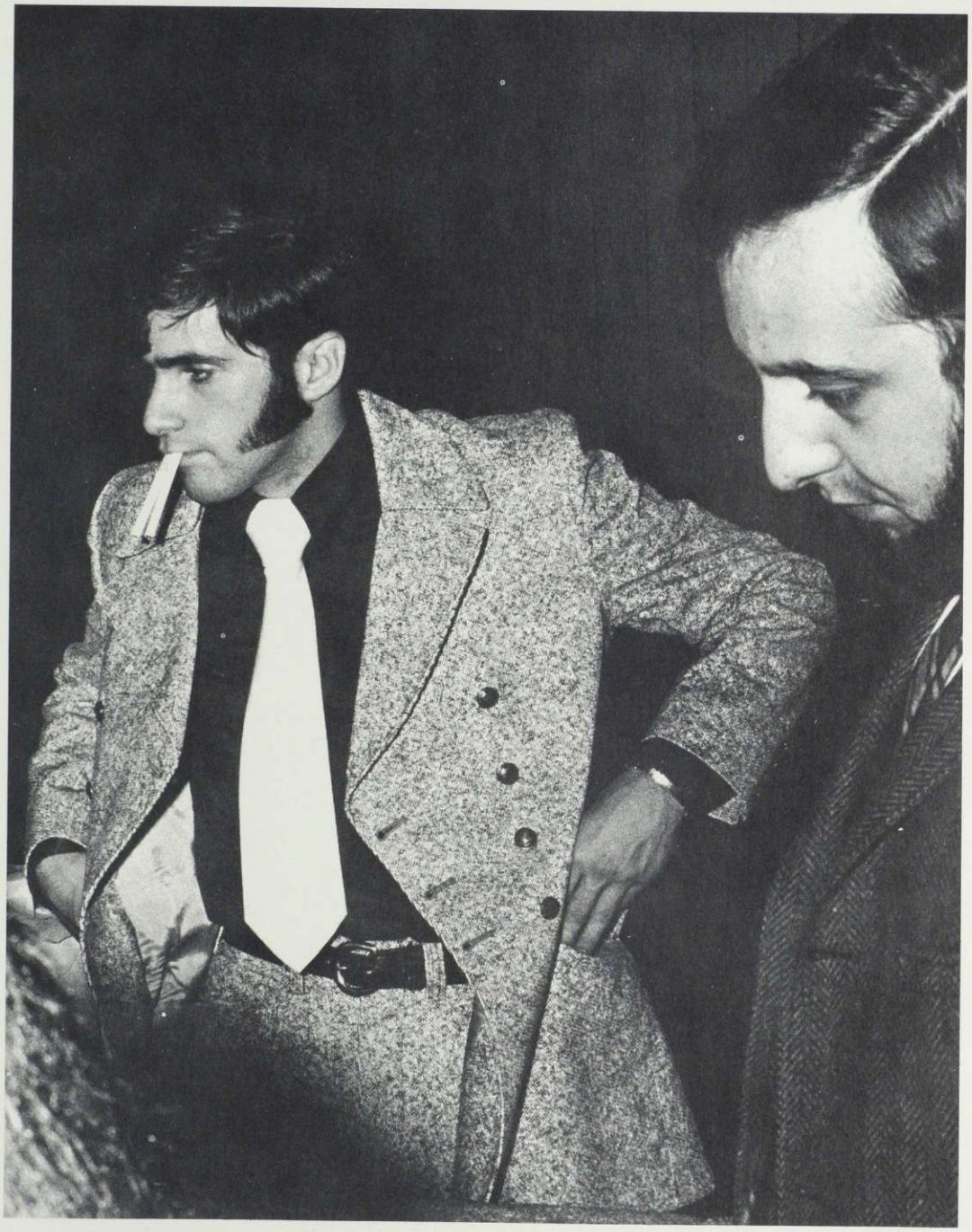

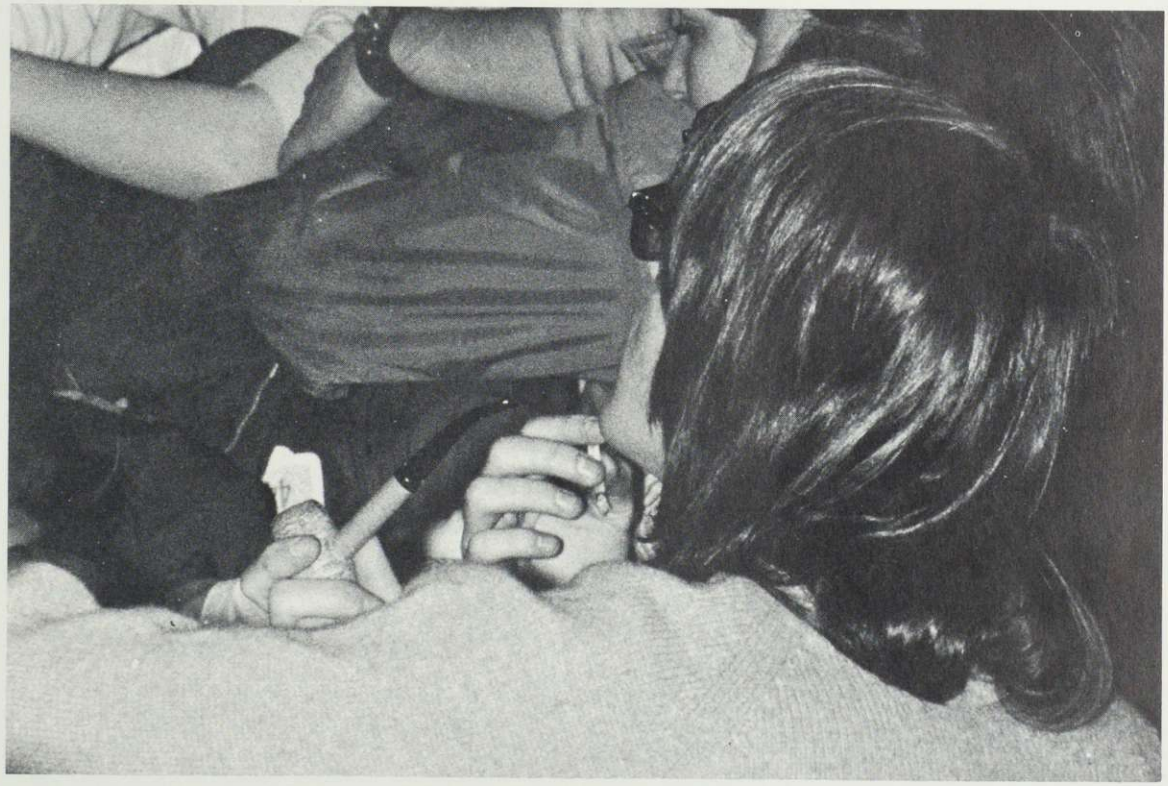

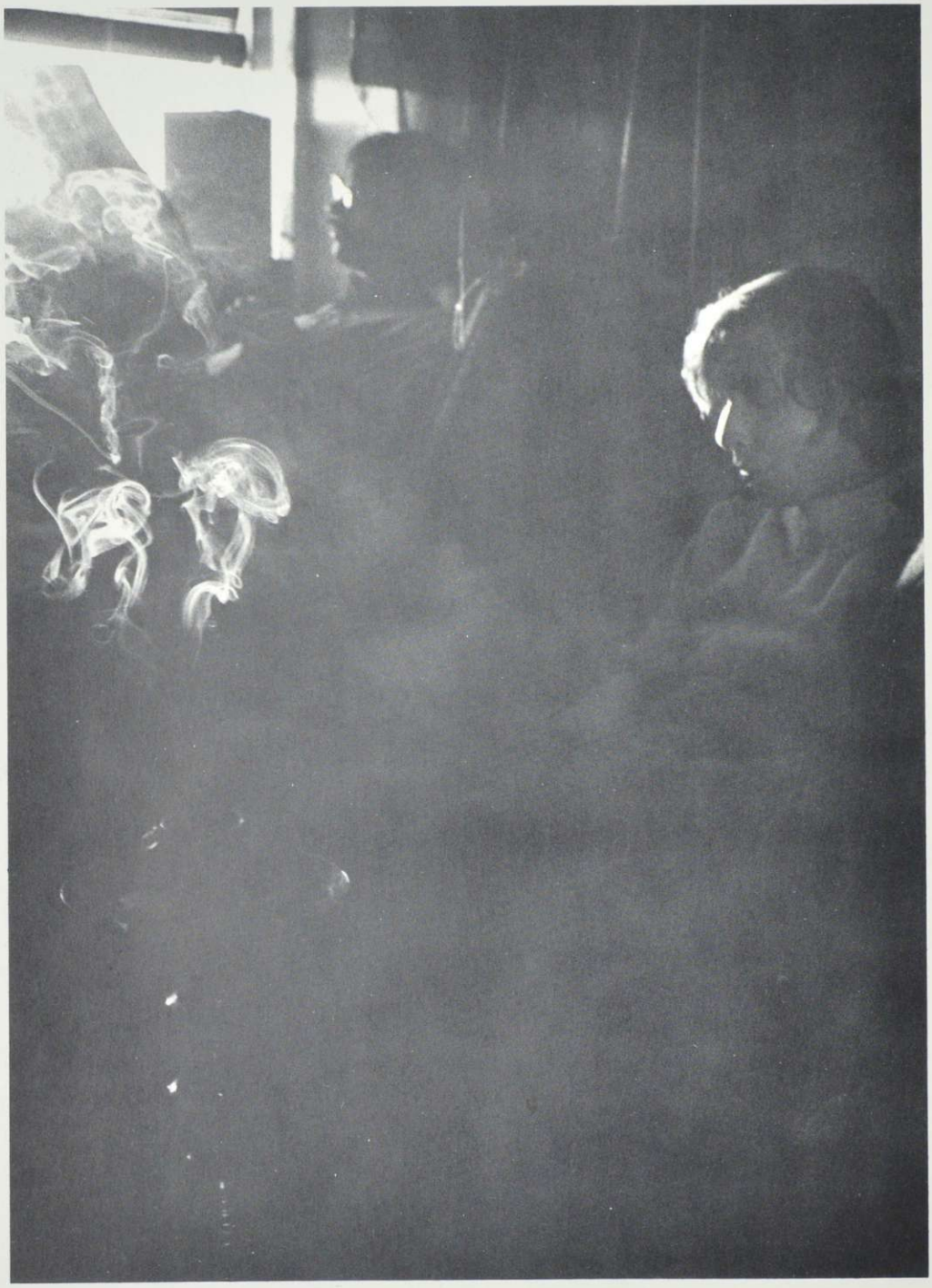

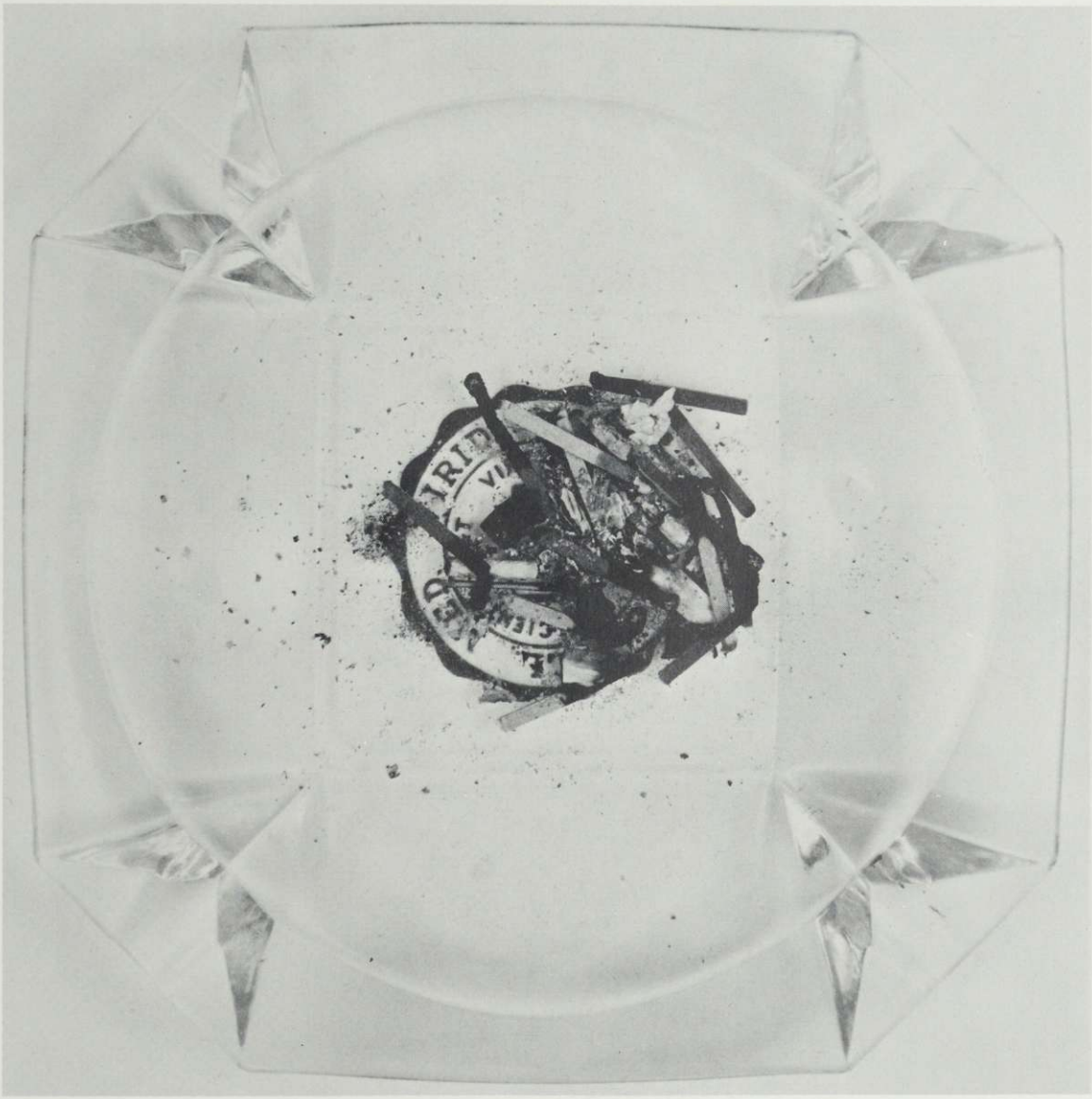

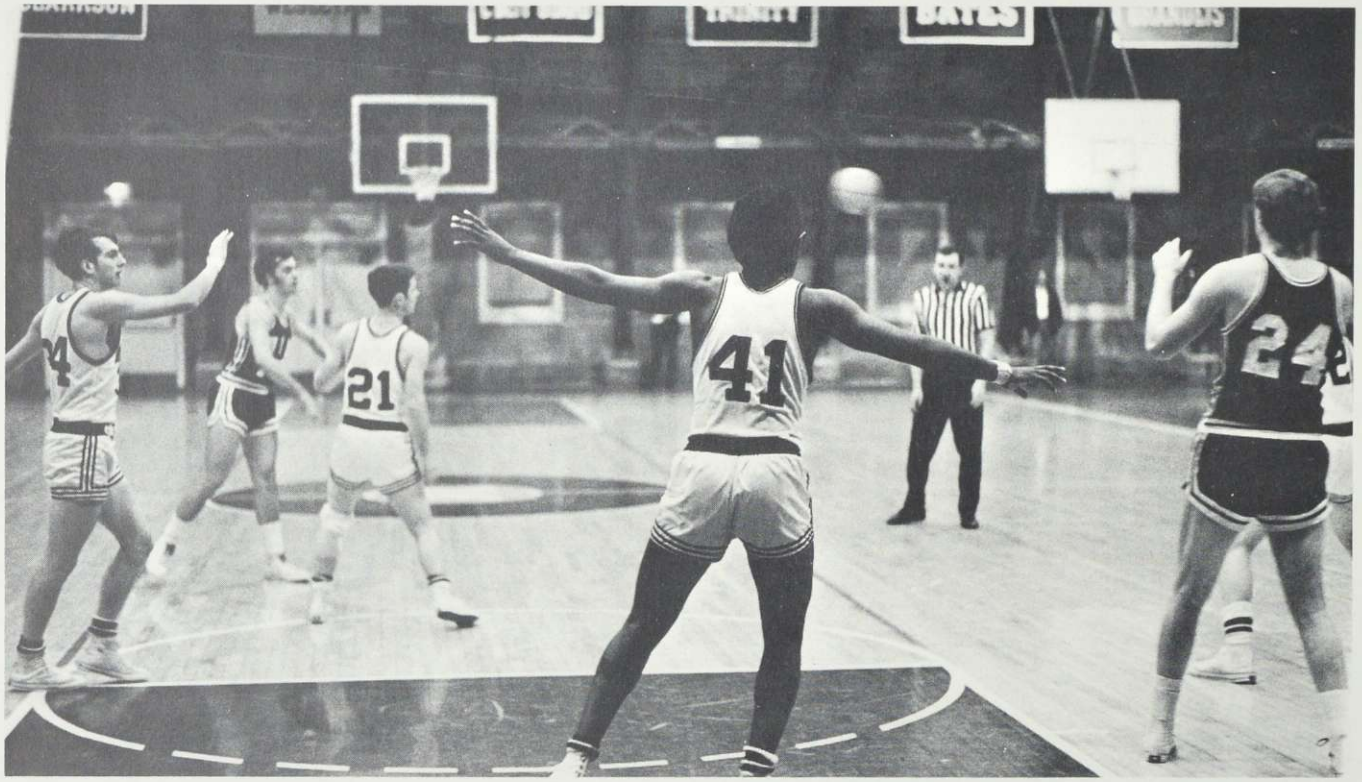
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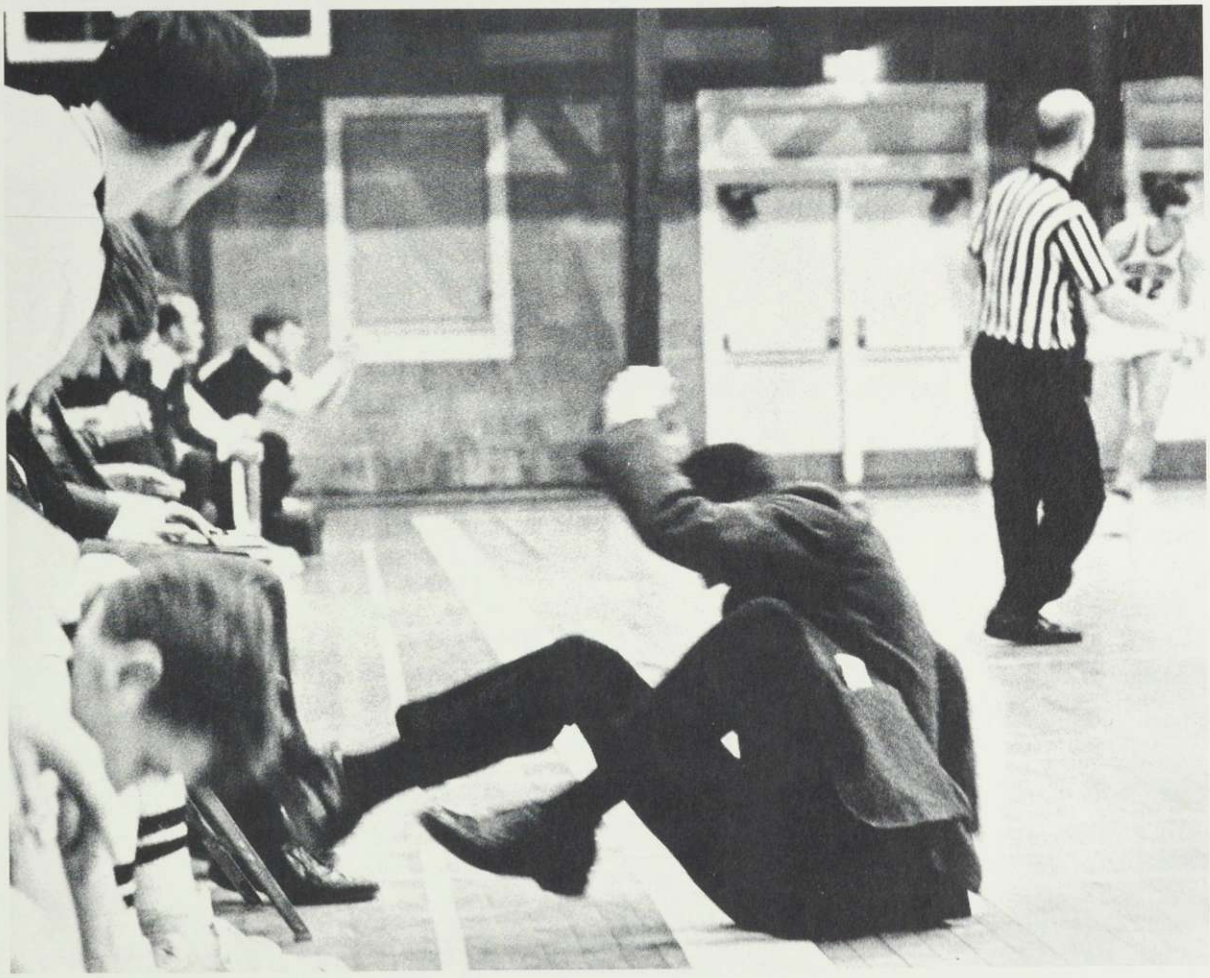
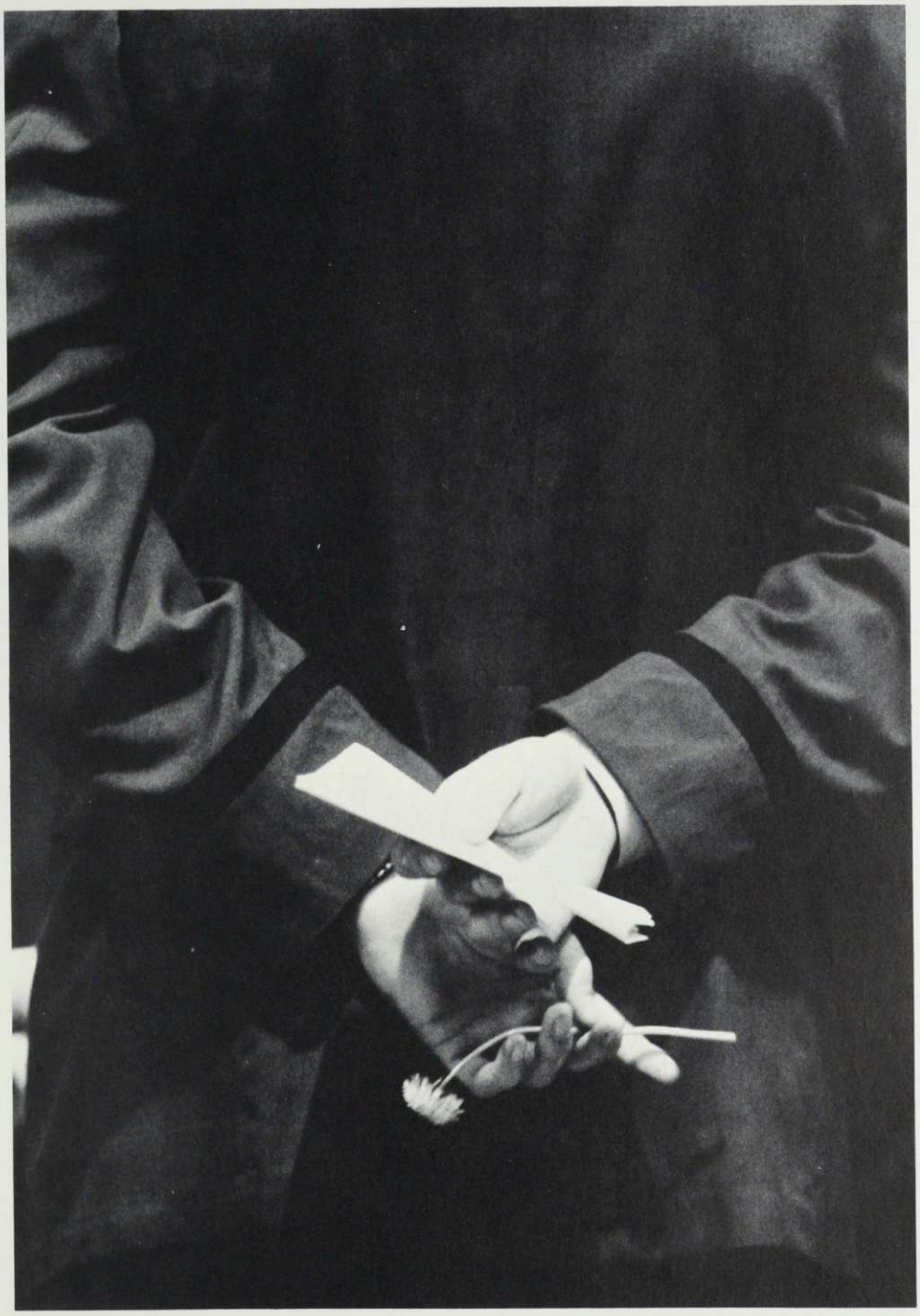
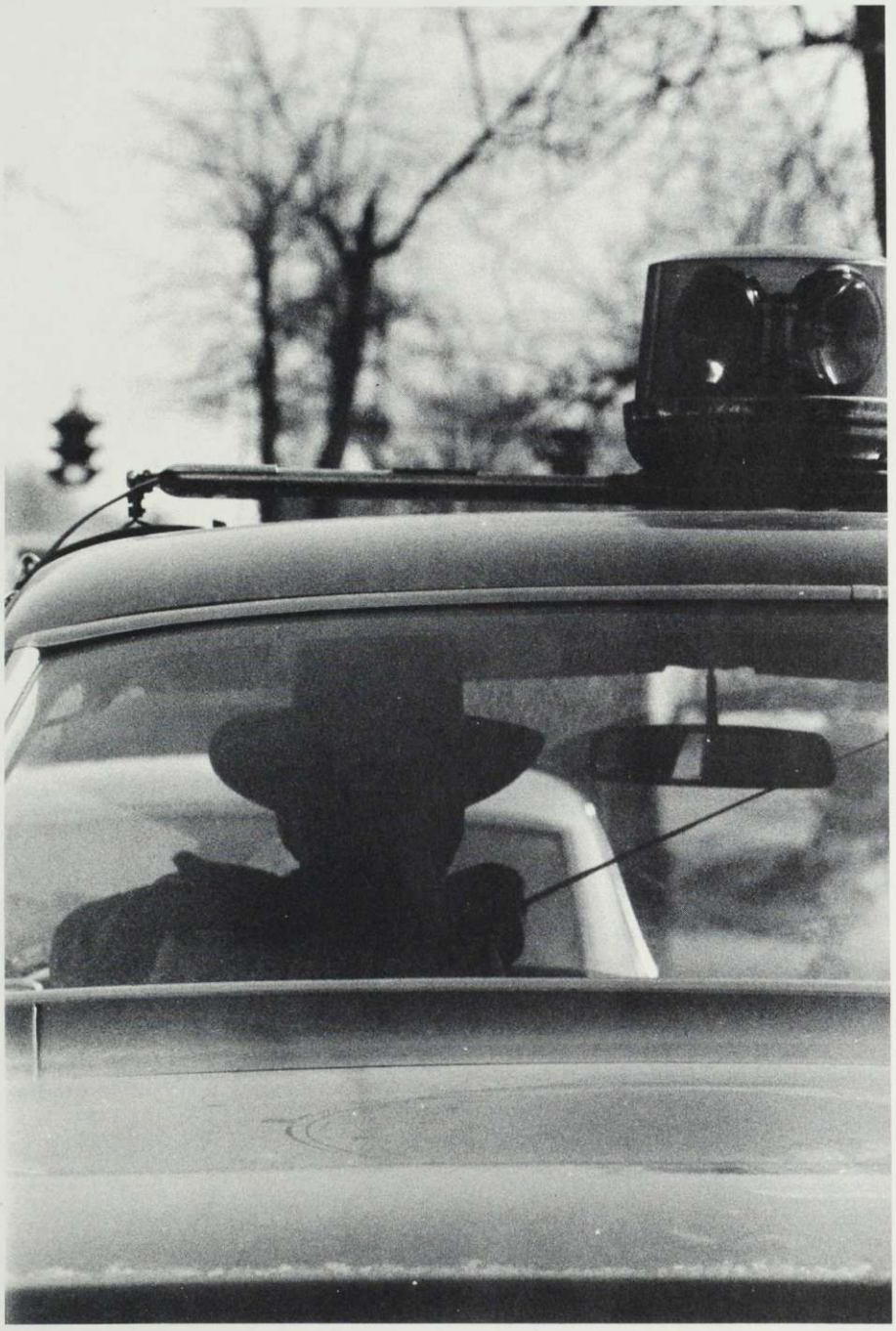


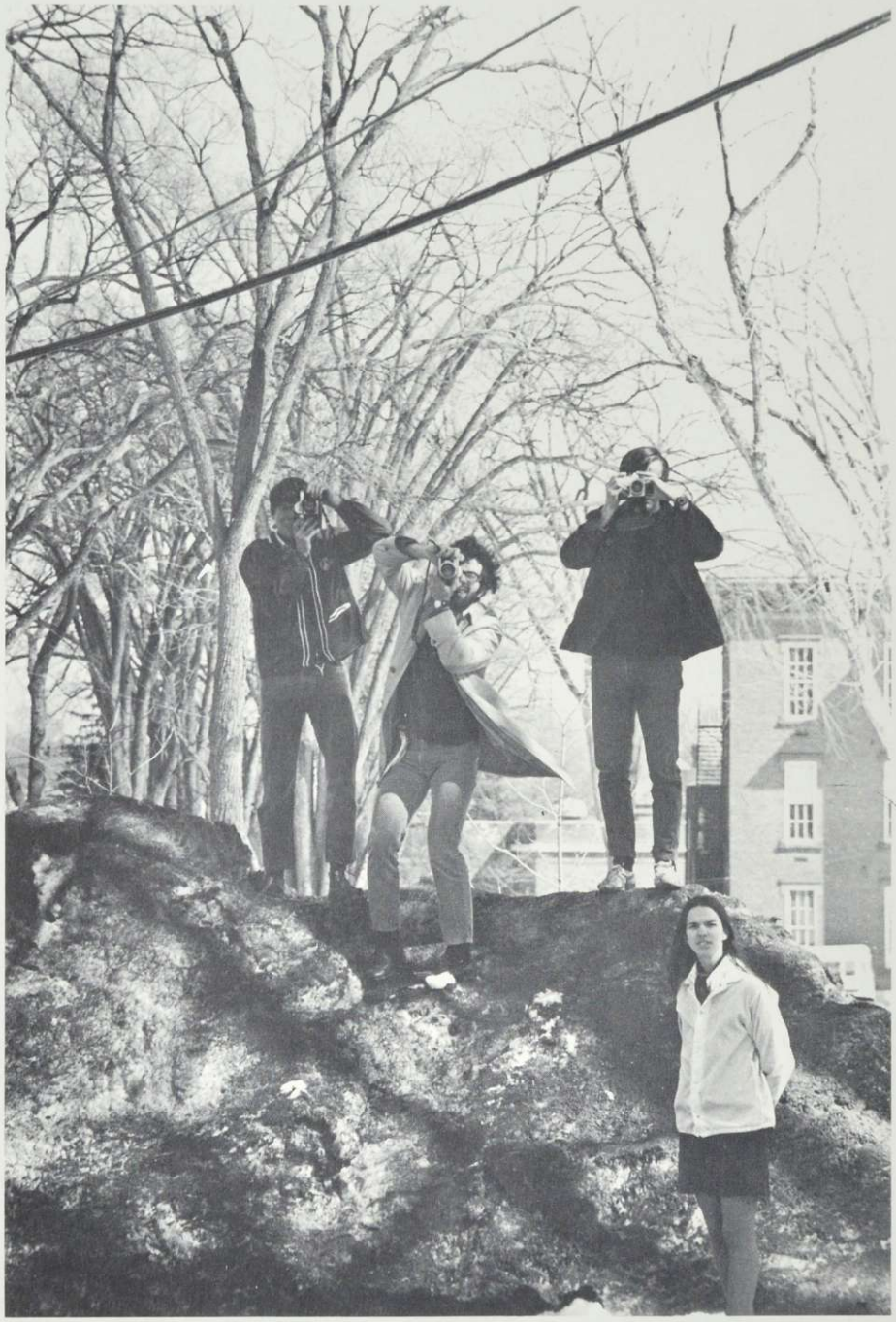
SAYRE



HO, HO
HO CHI MINH
the
NLF
is
GONNA WIN
10,000
STOP

PEOPLE
ARE FOR
LOVING
NOT KILLING
INFLA-
TION
END THE
WAR





TREES
not
BOMBS

ROOM 13
SELECTIVE SERV
LOCAL BOARD
NO.1

Co-Conspiracy

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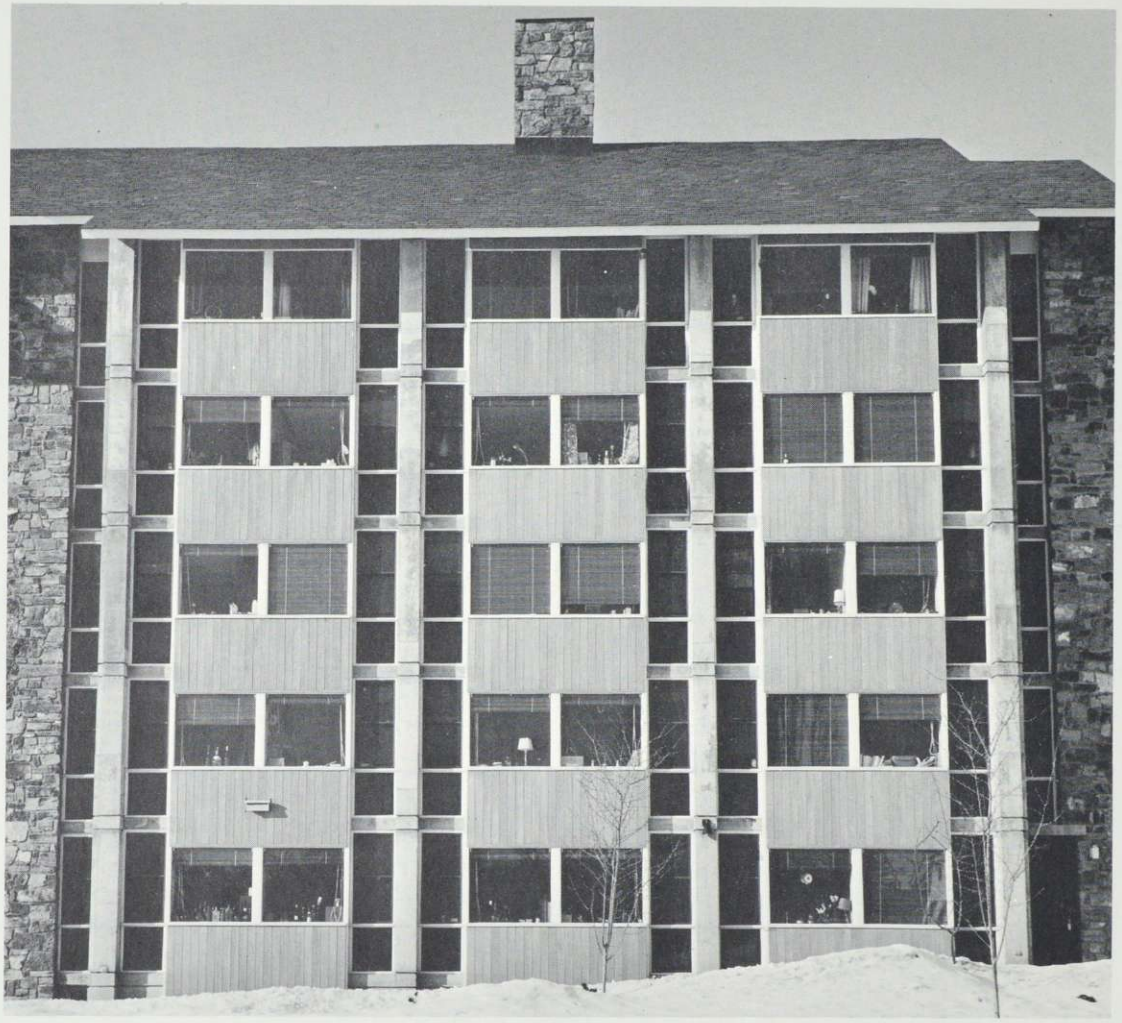
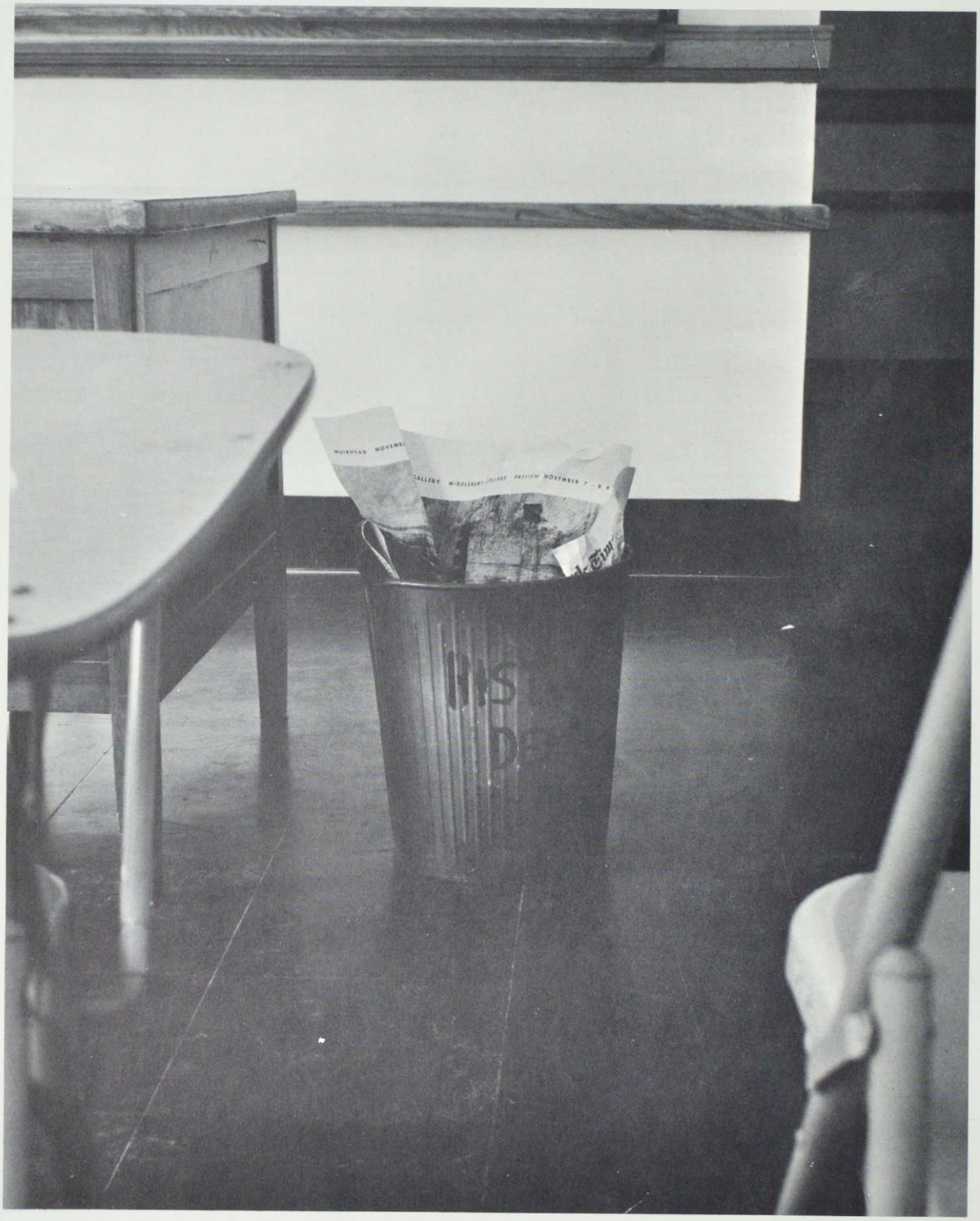
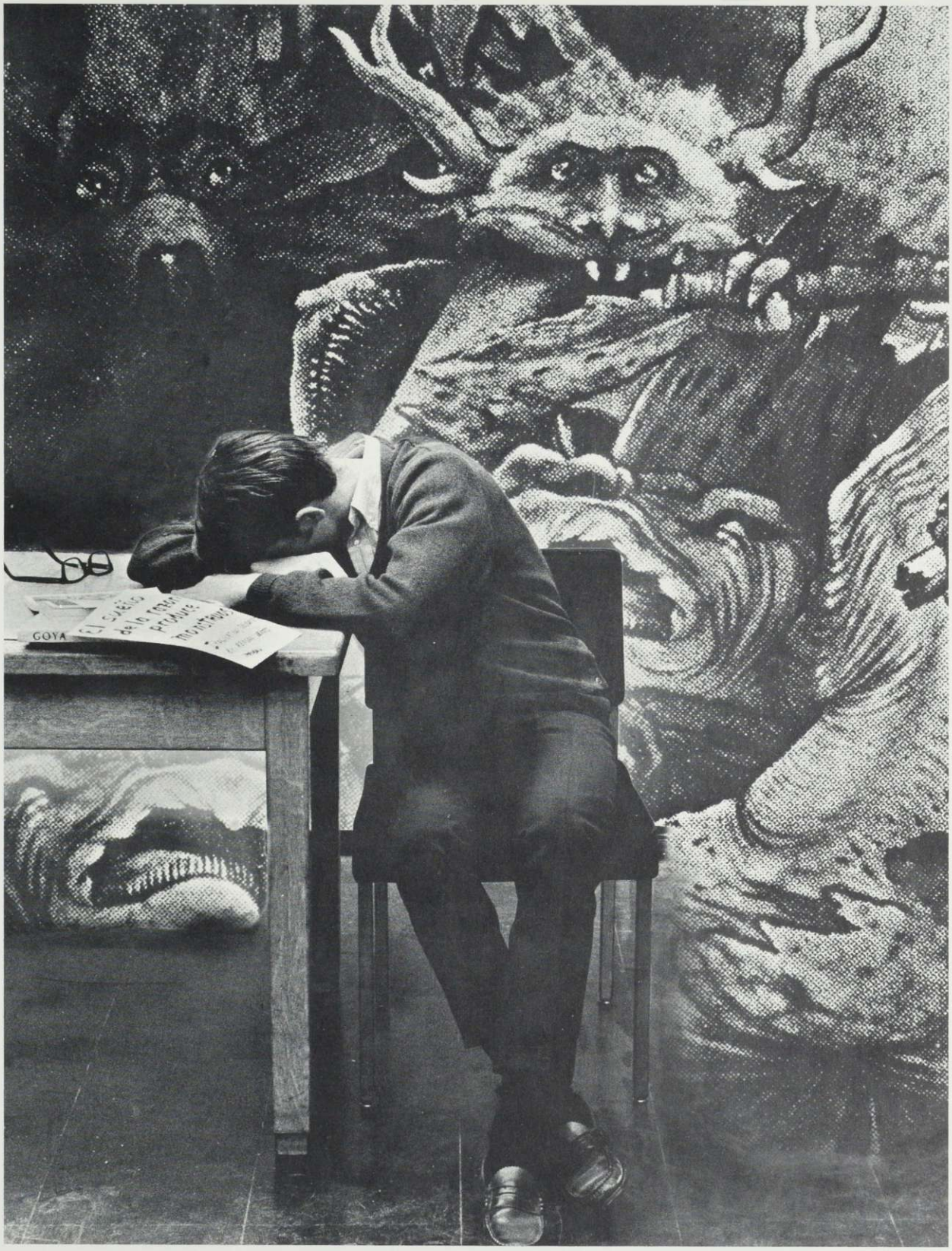
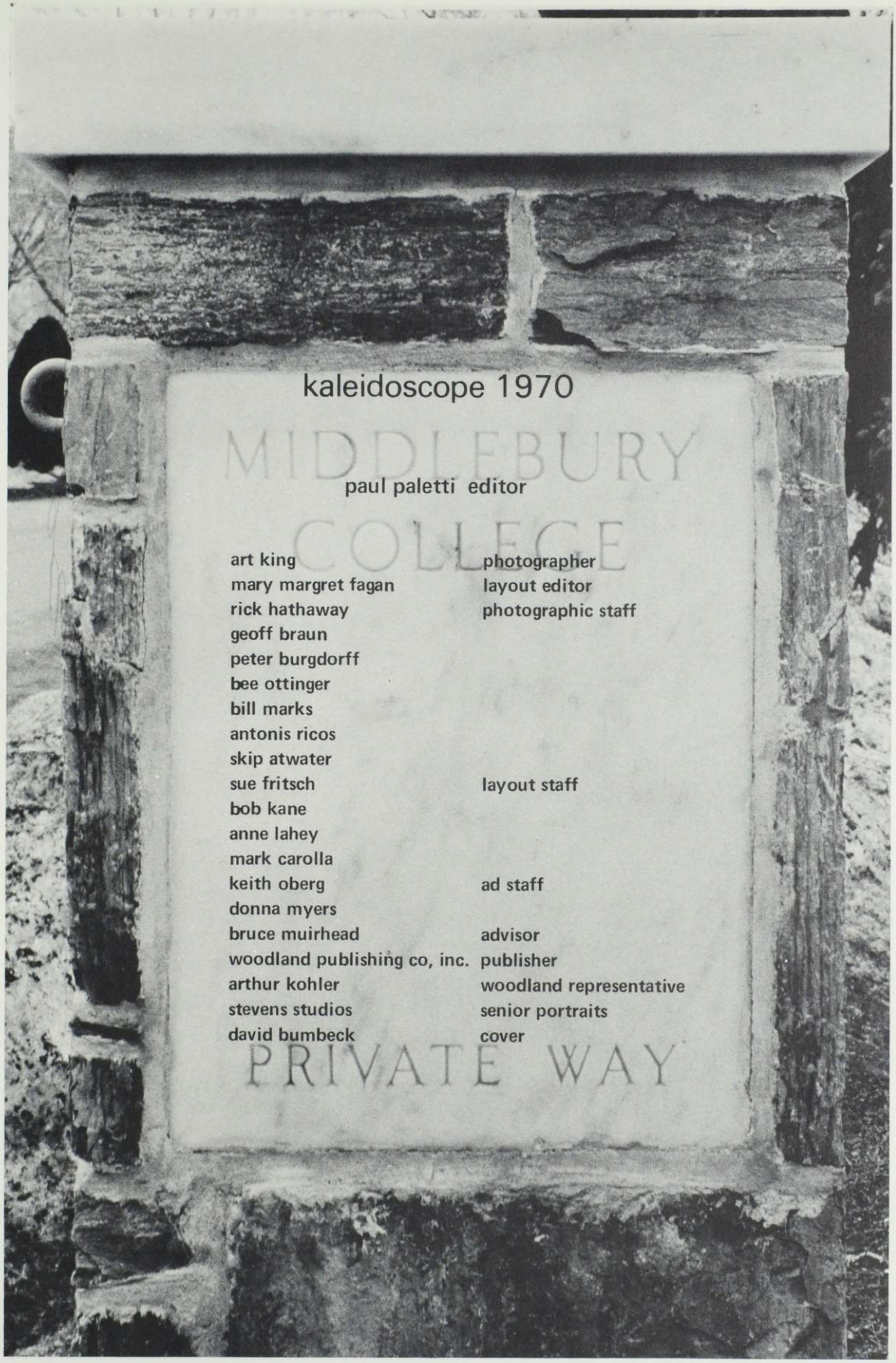
WINCHESTER






GOYA



kaleidoscope 1970

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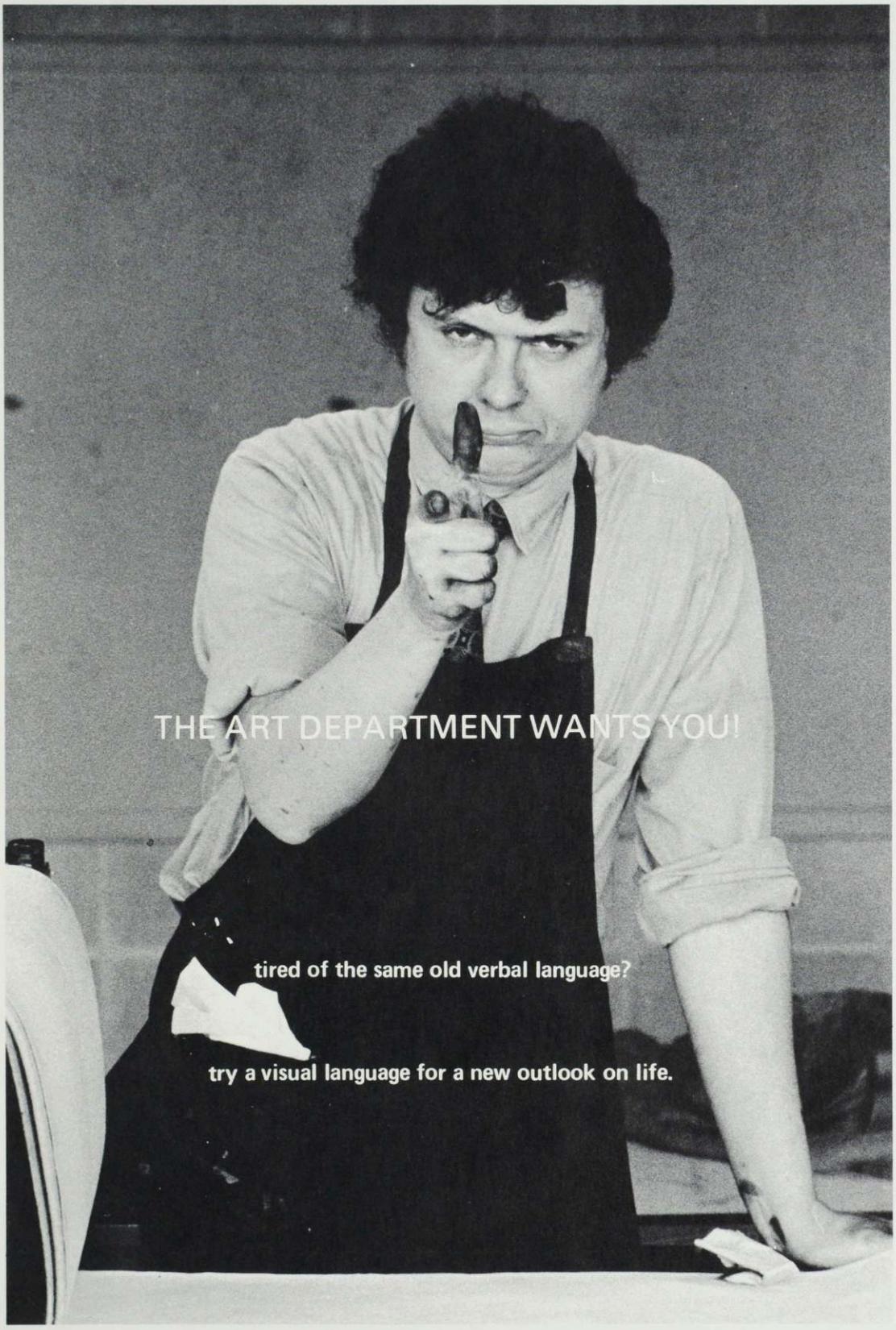
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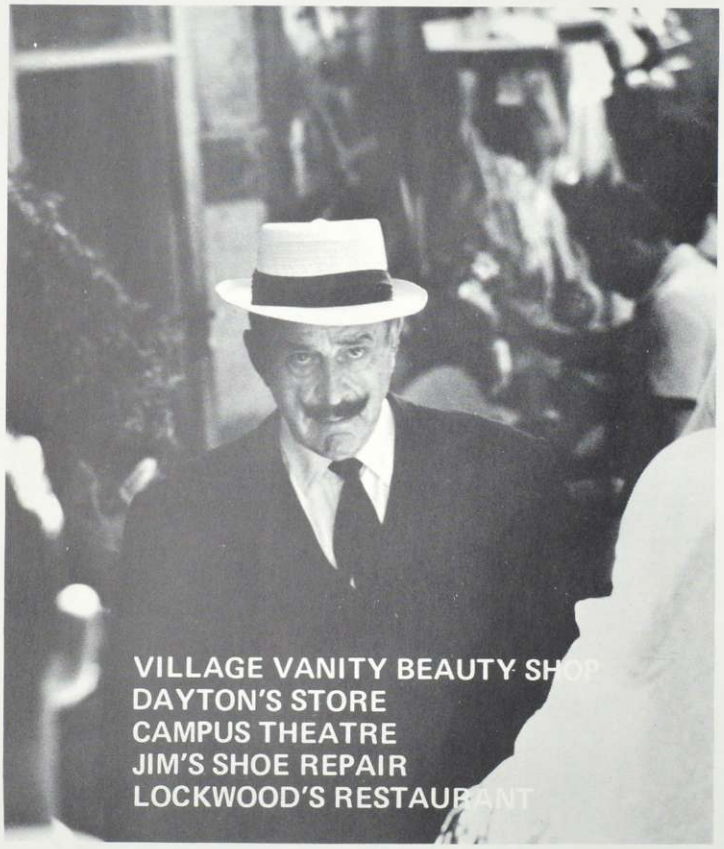

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CAMPUS THEATRE
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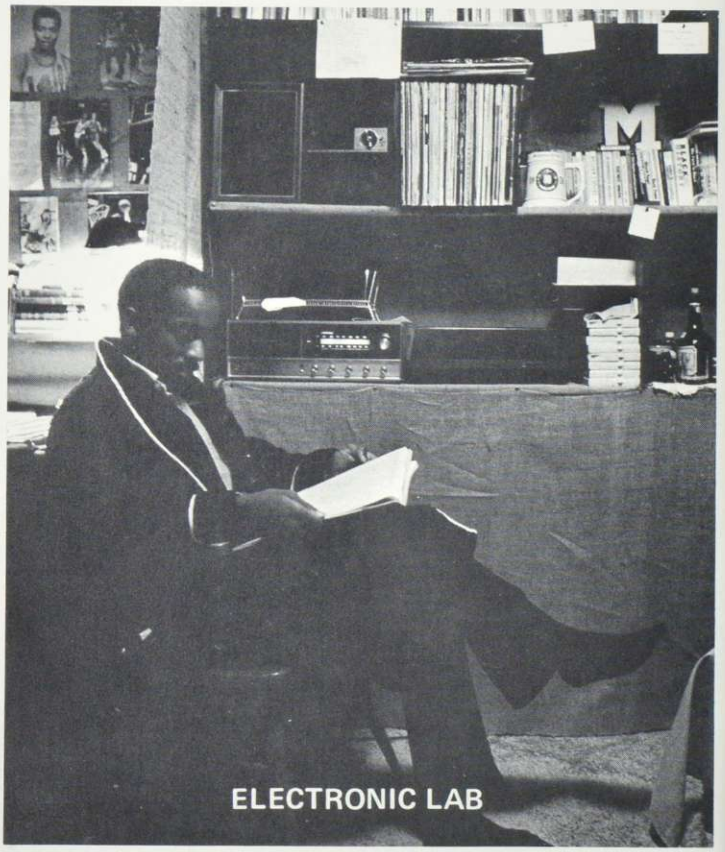
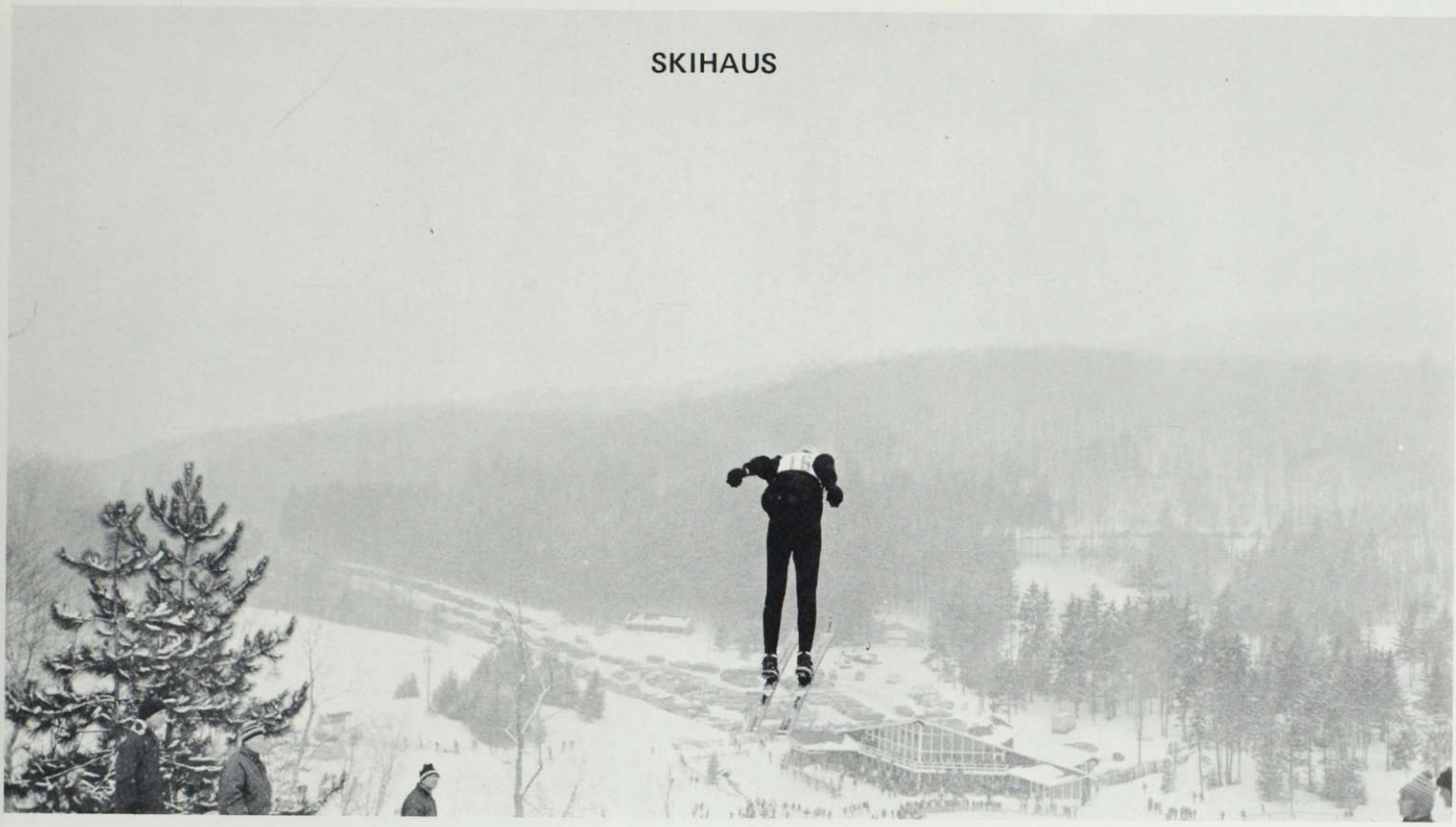


ELECTRONIC LAB

SKIHAUS



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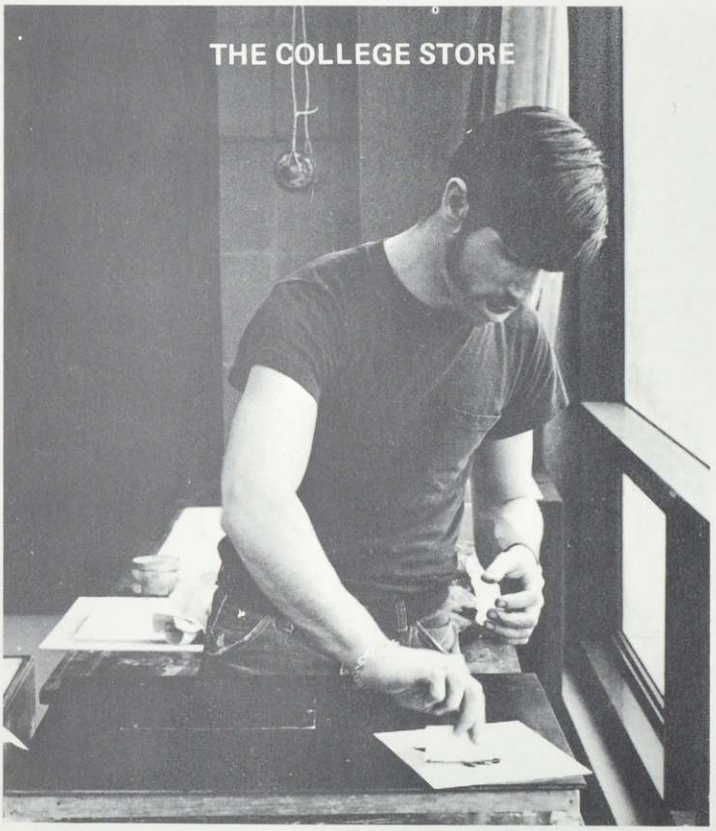
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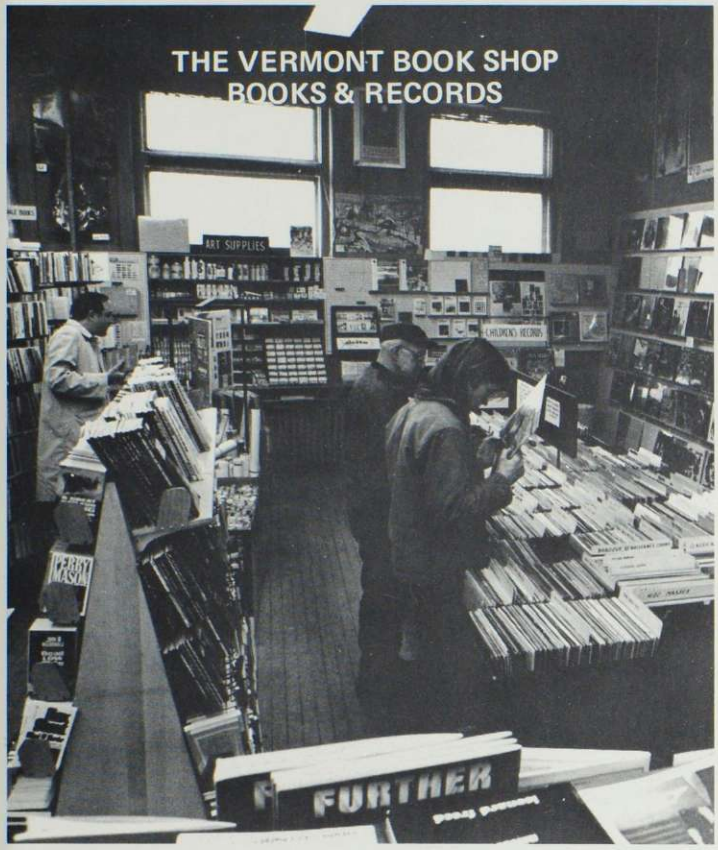

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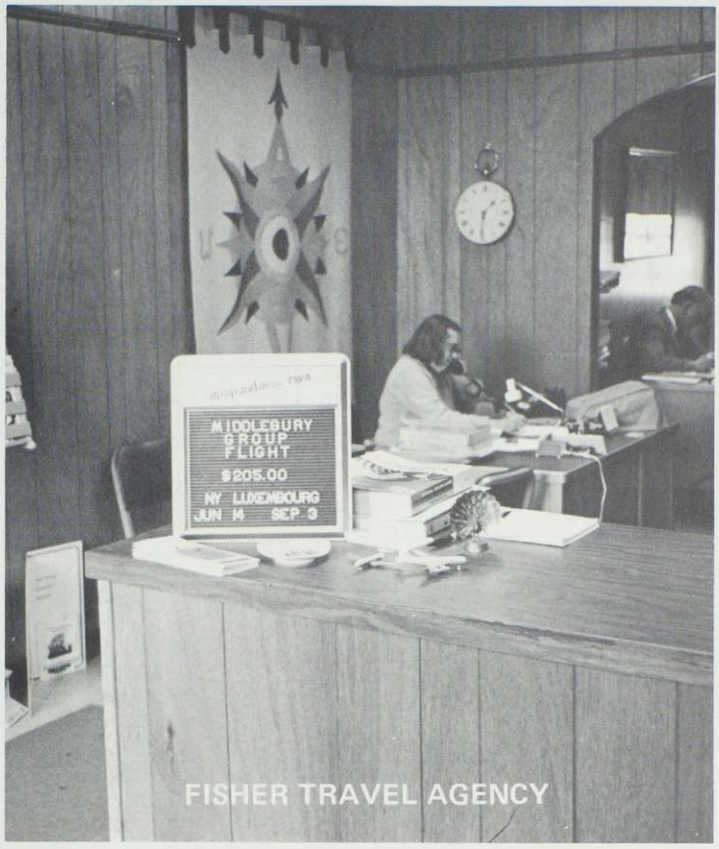

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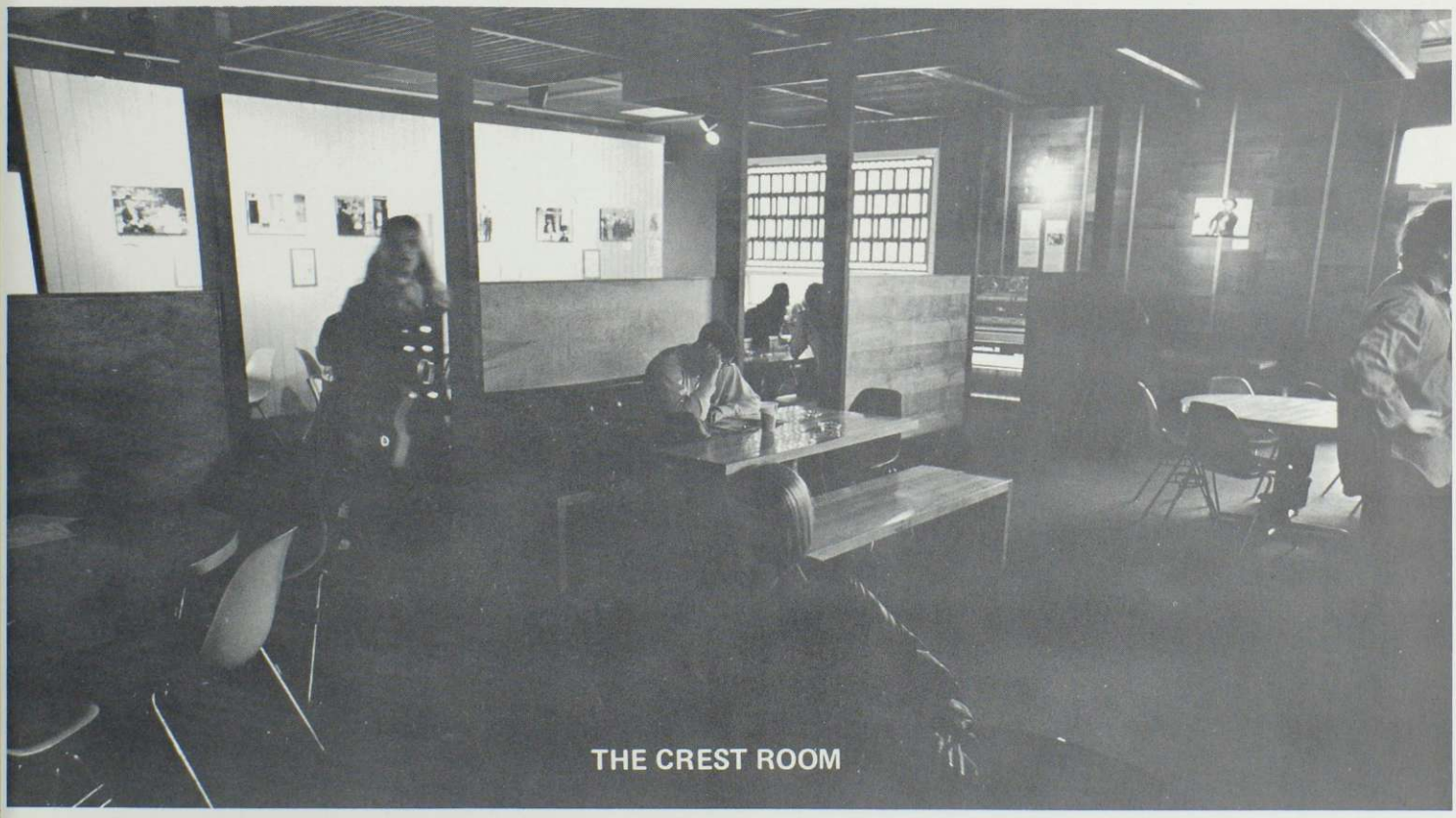

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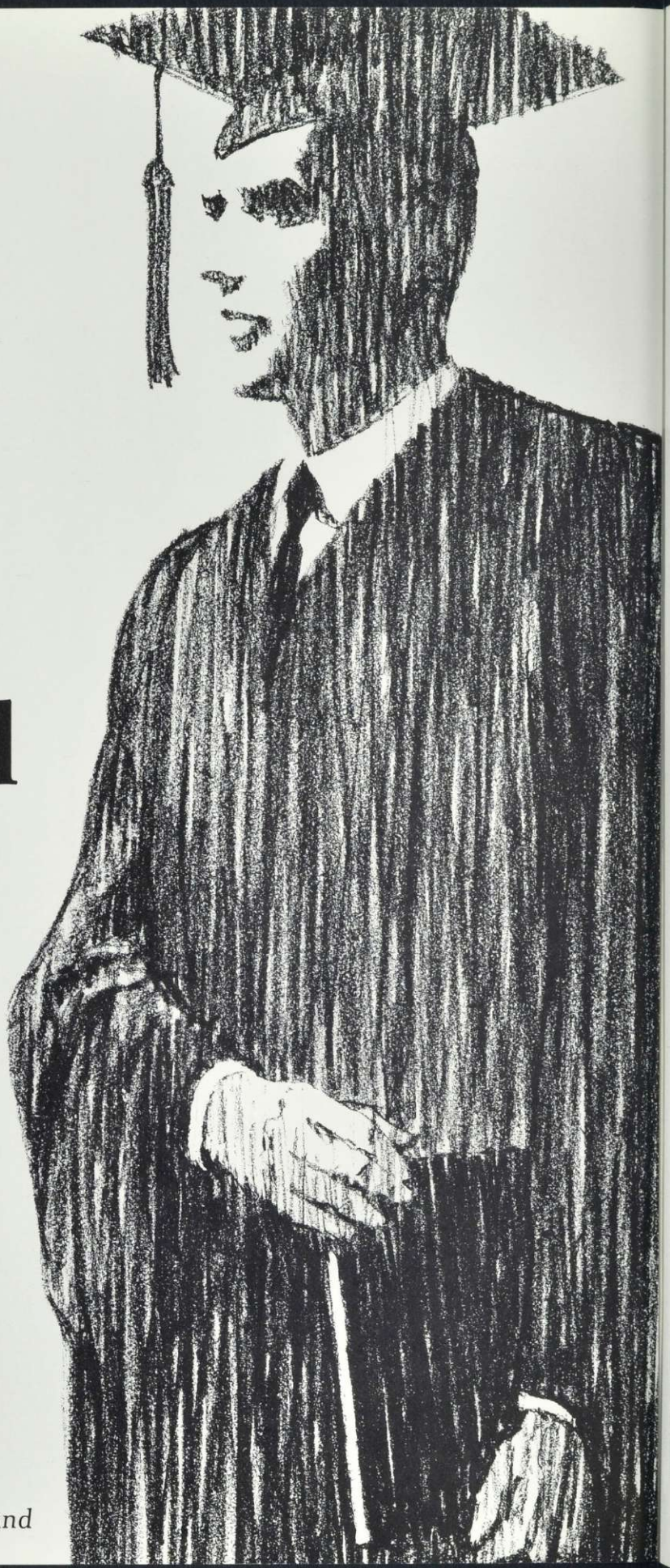

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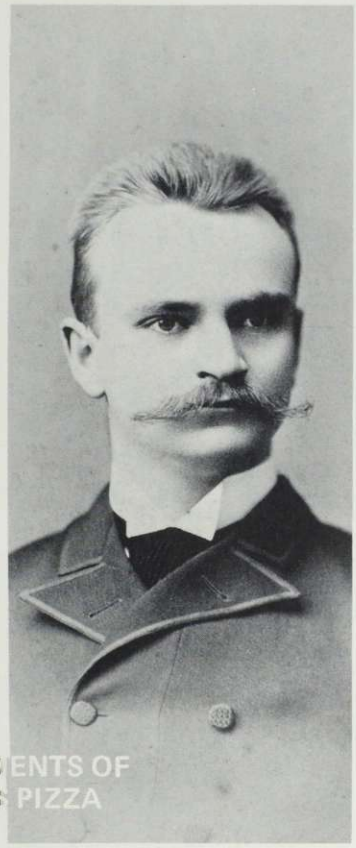
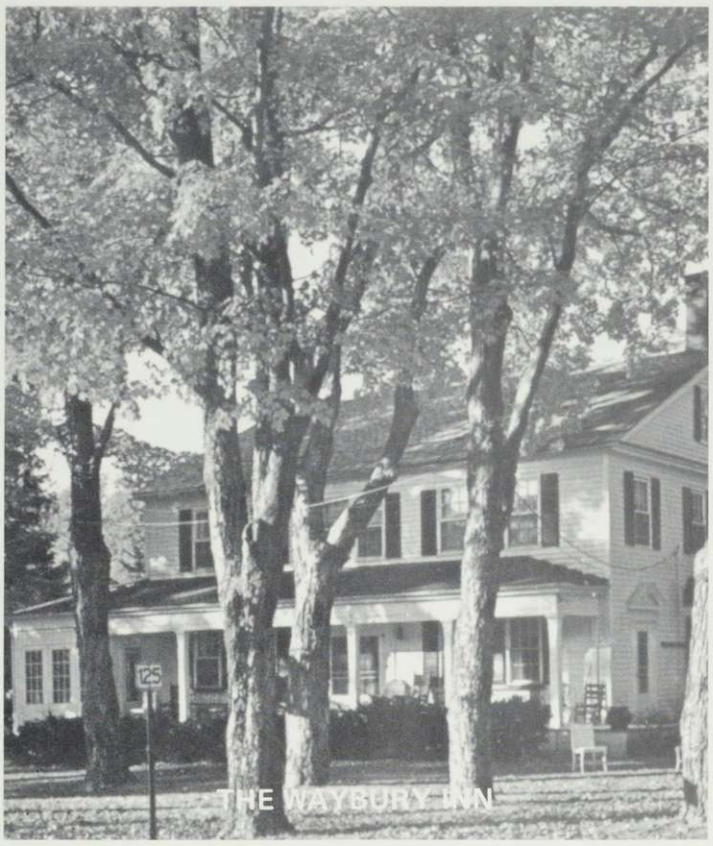


COMPLIMENTS OF
TONY'S PIZZA



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rhoda highsaw agle history

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robert a. apple, jr. geography

johann s. bach propagation

margaret g. ball geography

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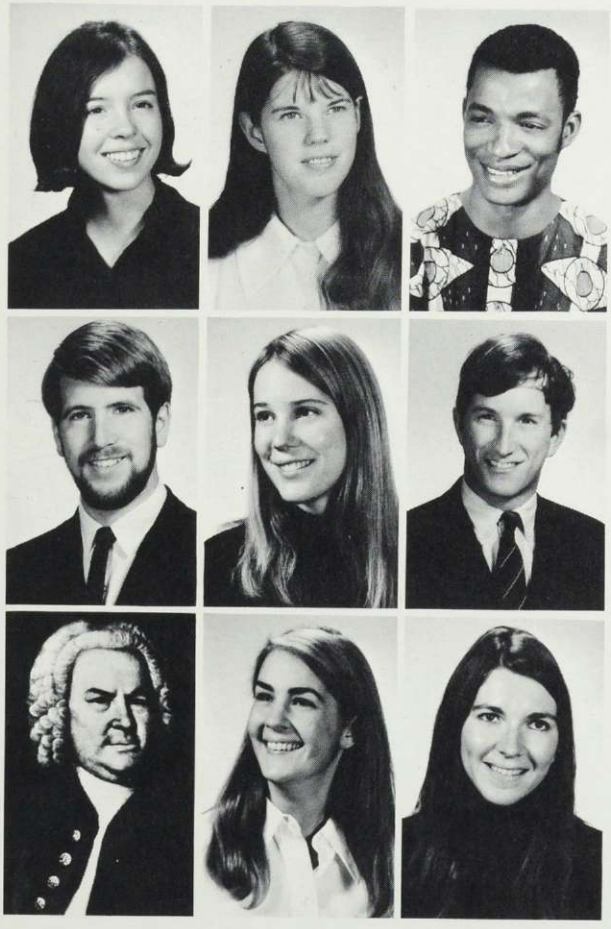

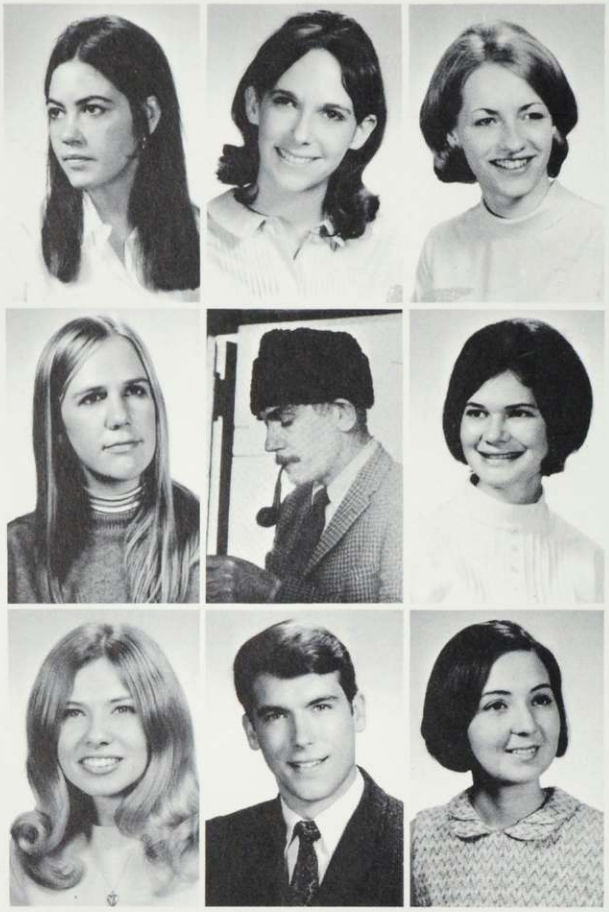

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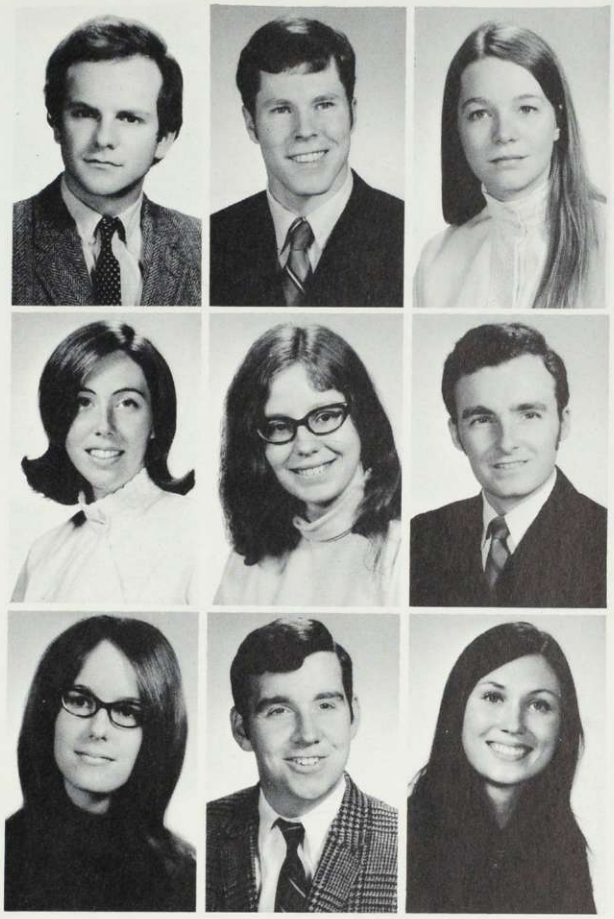

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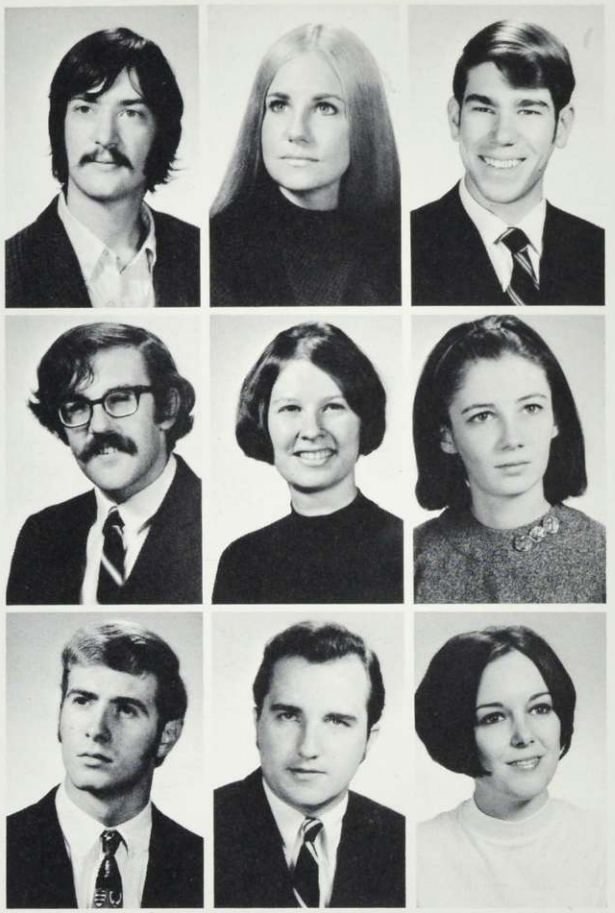

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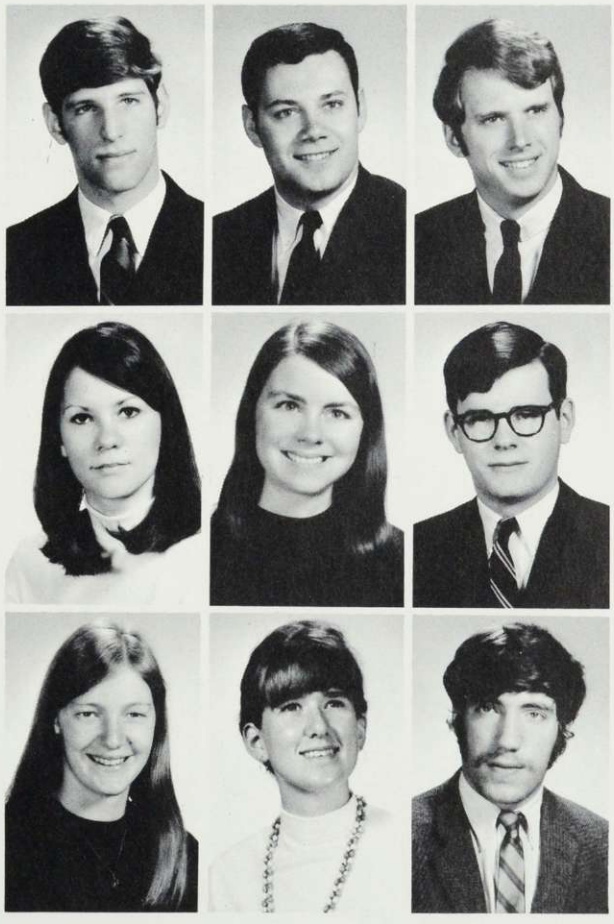

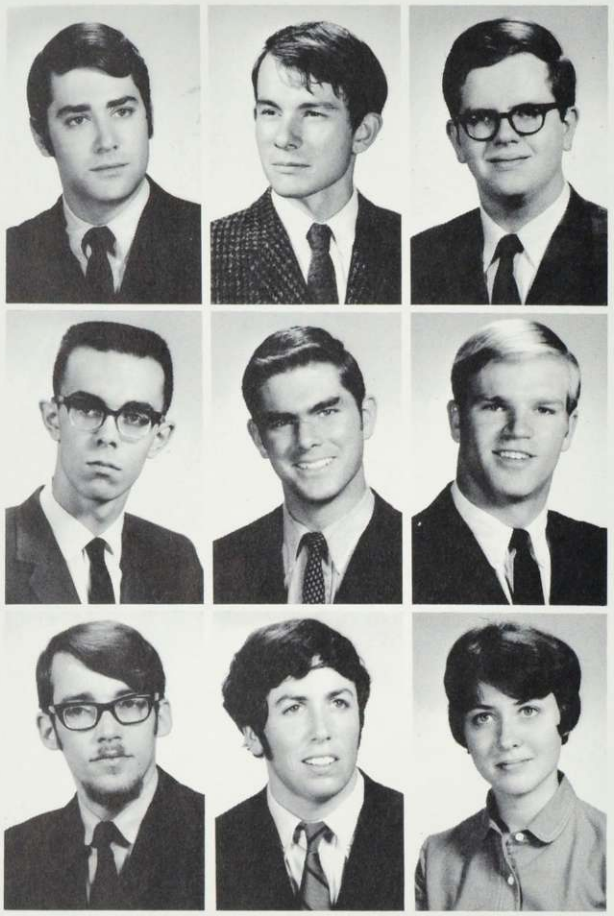

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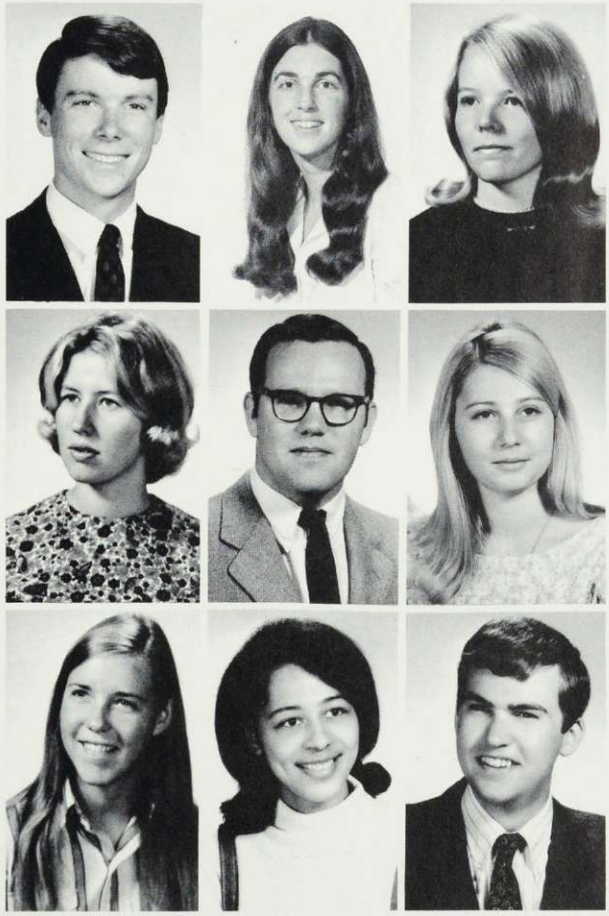

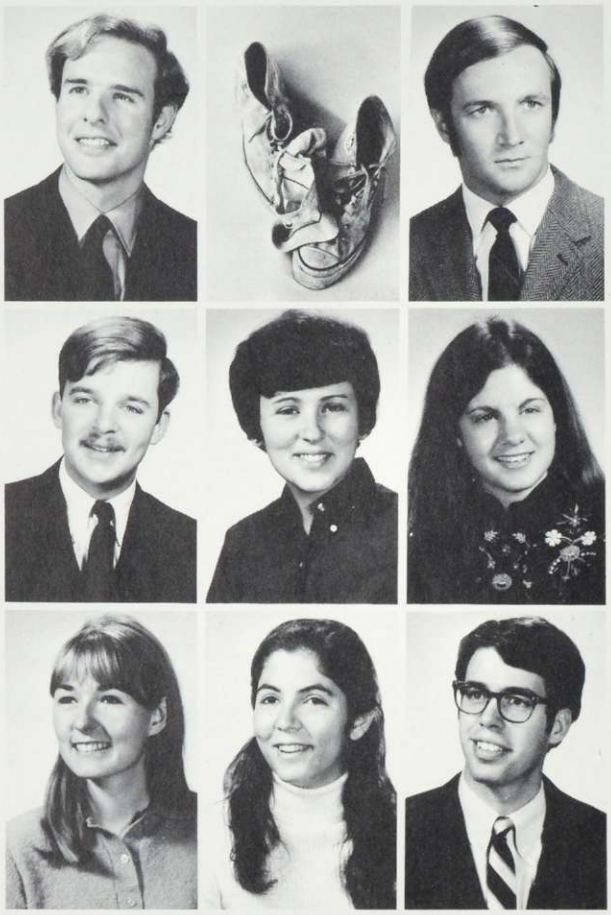

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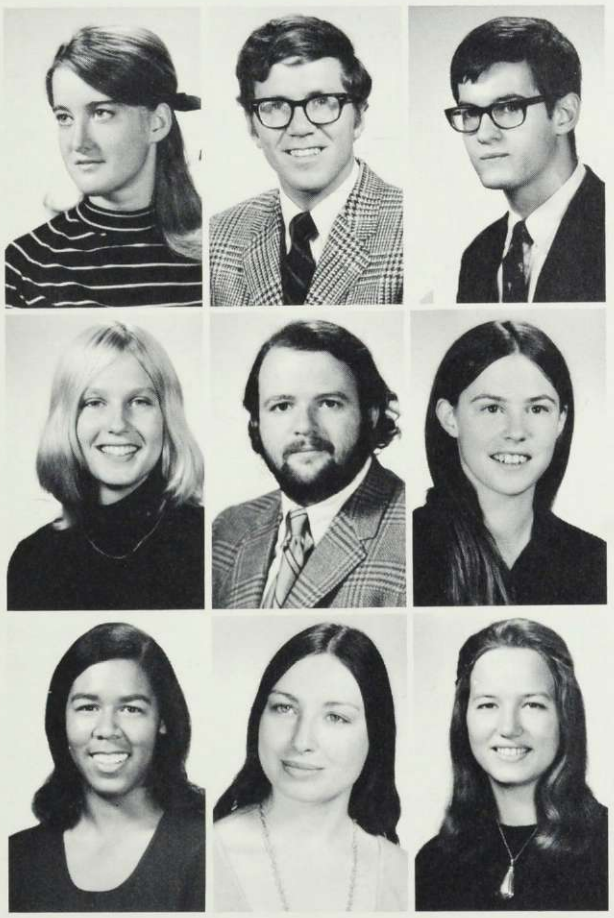

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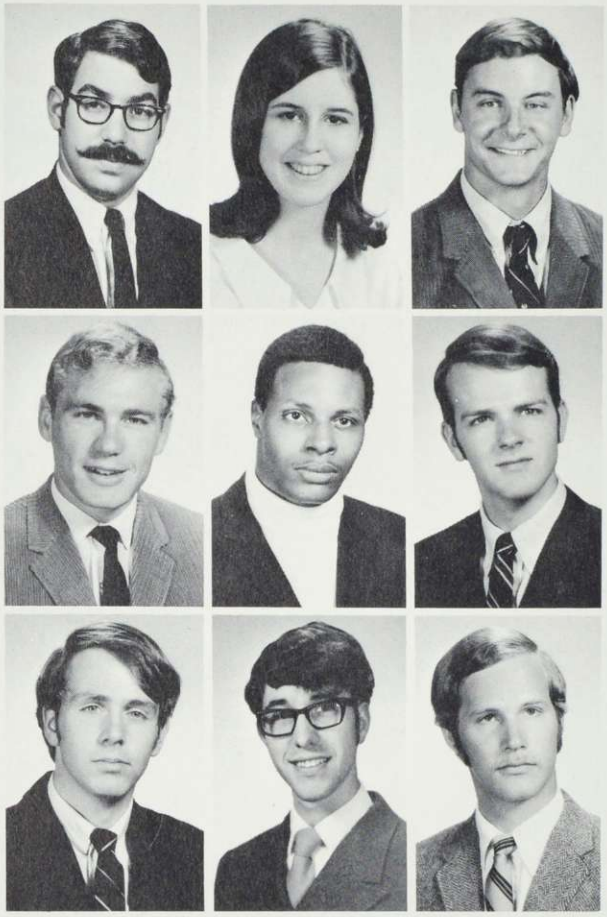

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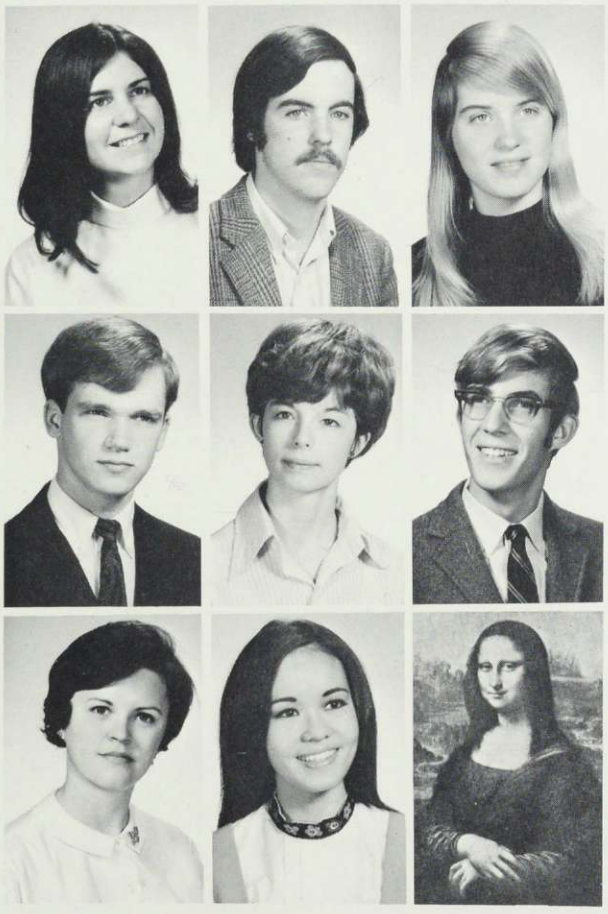

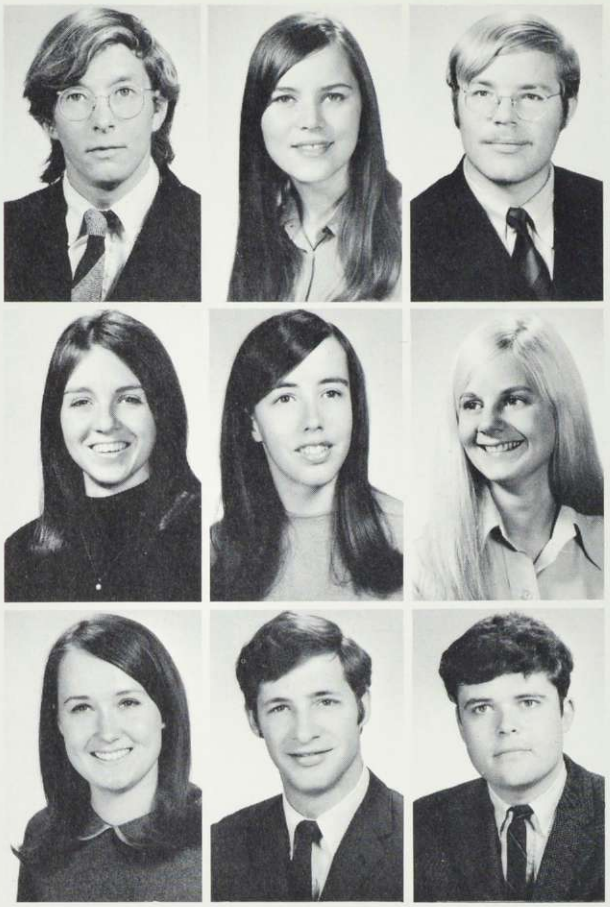

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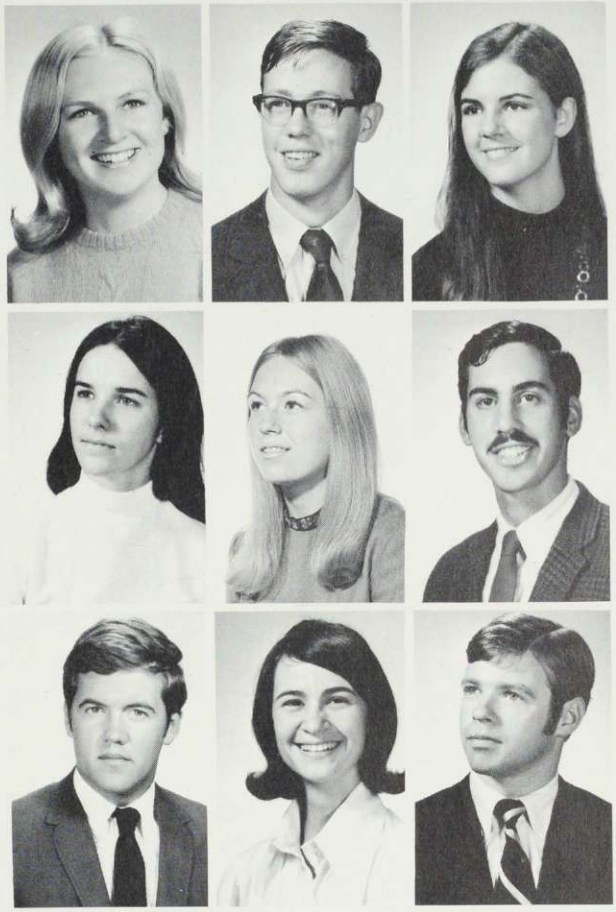

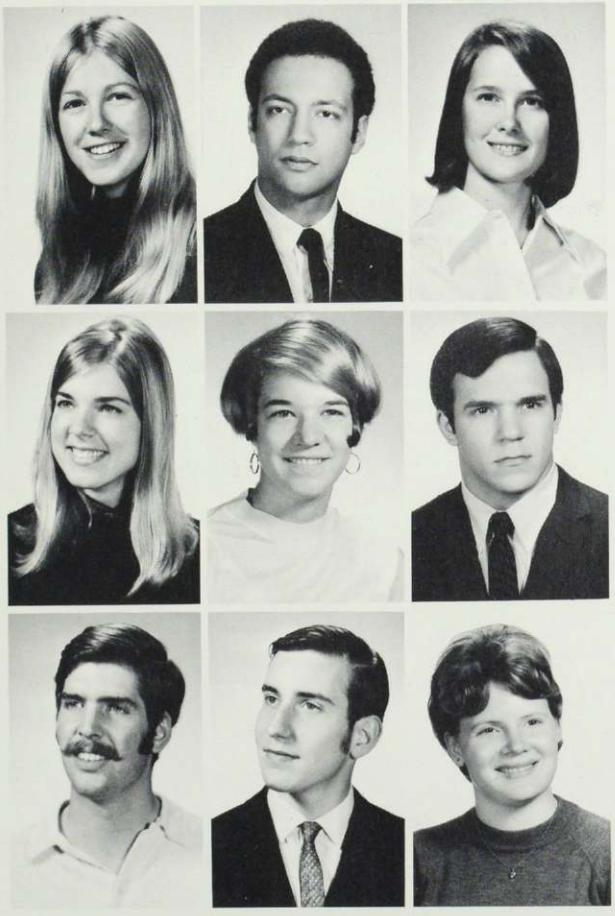

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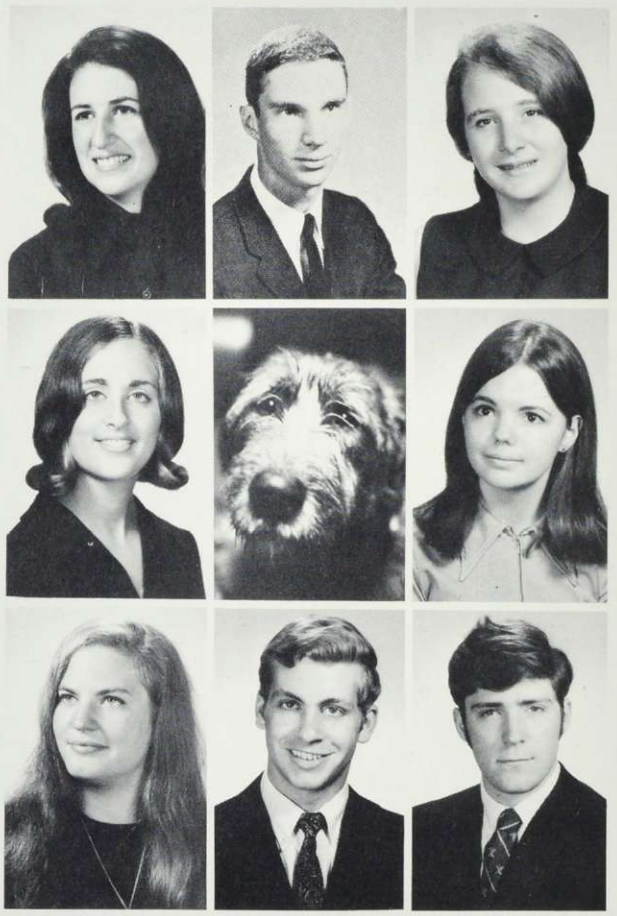

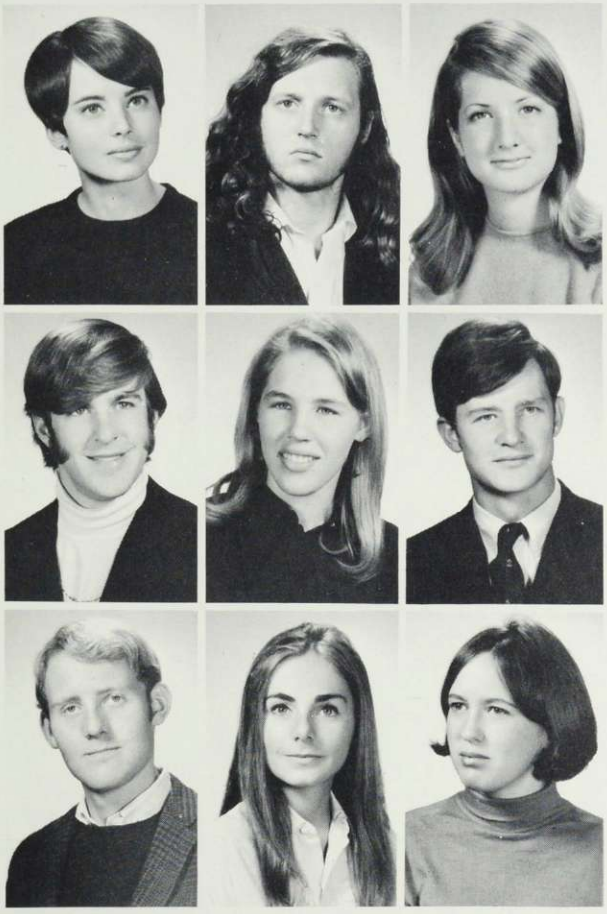

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a. grahame
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marshall ian
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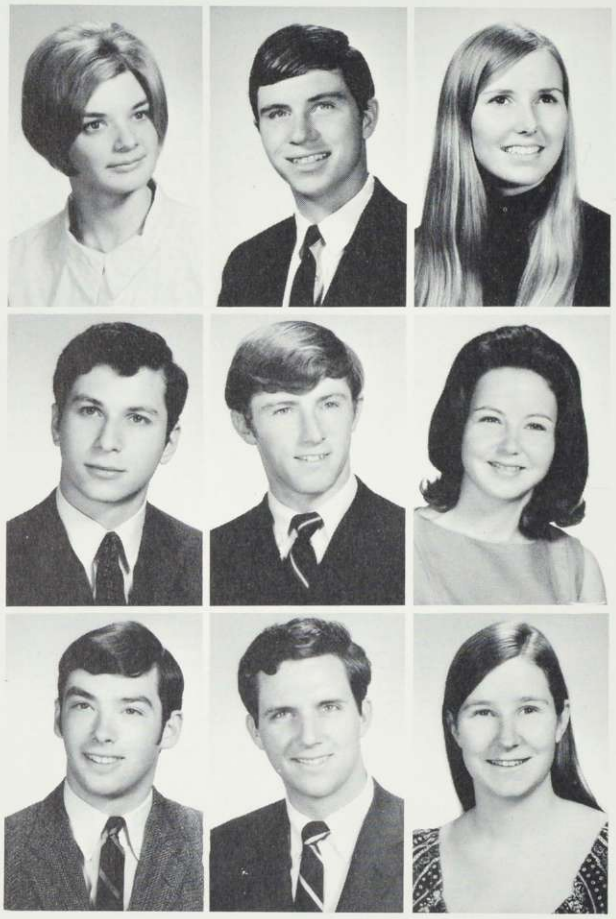

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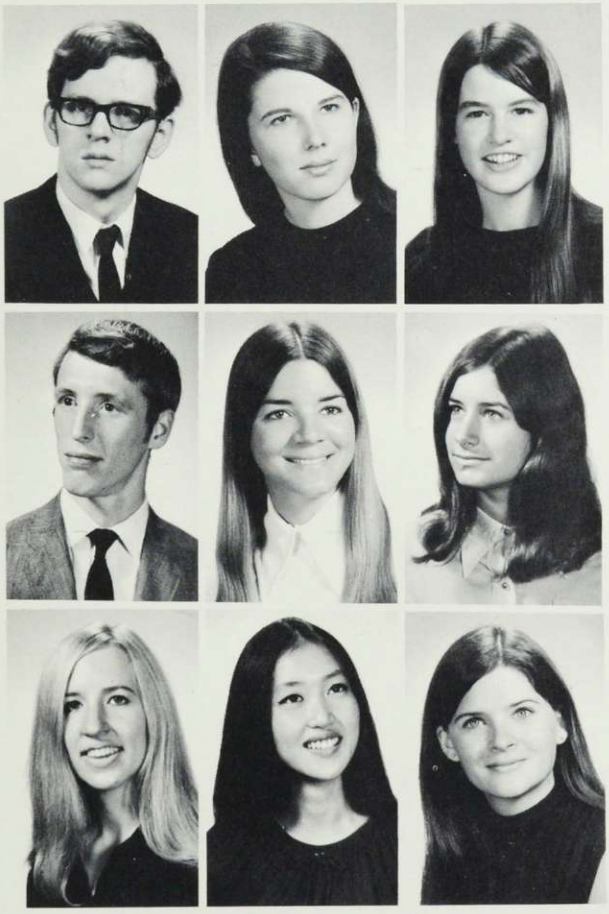

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robert g. van wert
american literature

james s. watson
political science

jo anne wayles
mathematics

geoffrey r. weiss
biology chemistry

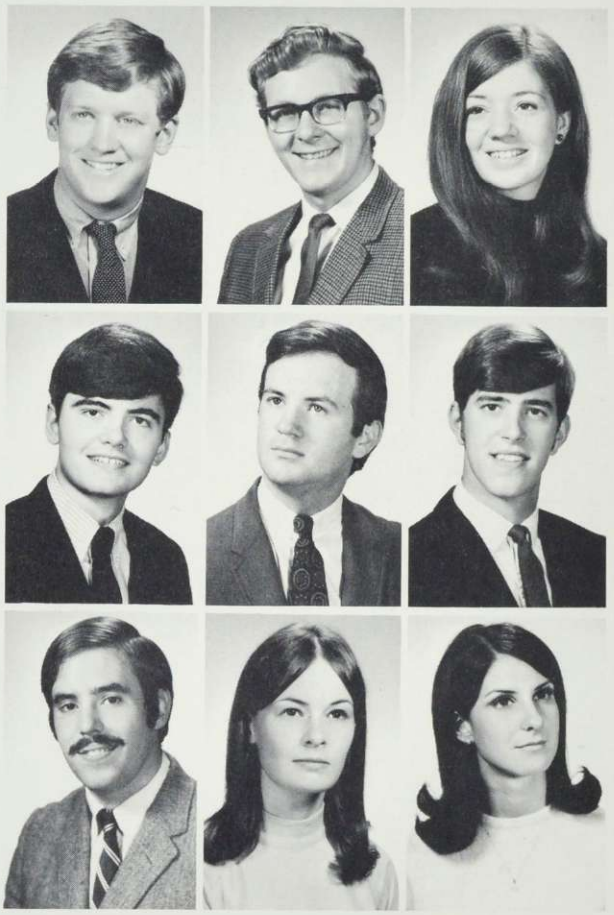
andrew m. wentink
history

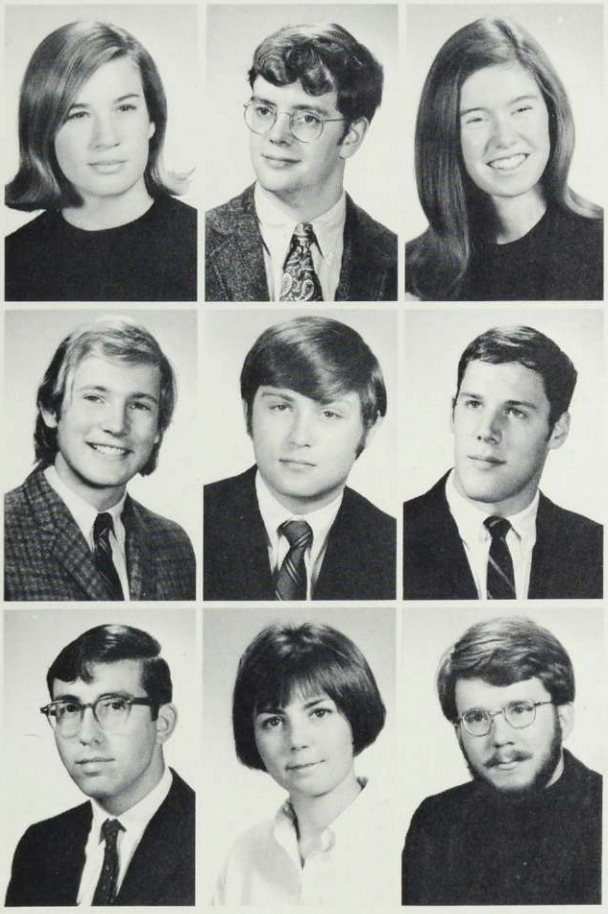
gary s. westerman
geography

sherman w. white
political science

jennifer c. wilcox
english

bronwen s. williams
english





patricia williams — english

albert e. willis jr. — chemistry

eleanor s. wilson — russian

james t. wilson jr. — geography

edmund a. winnicki — economics

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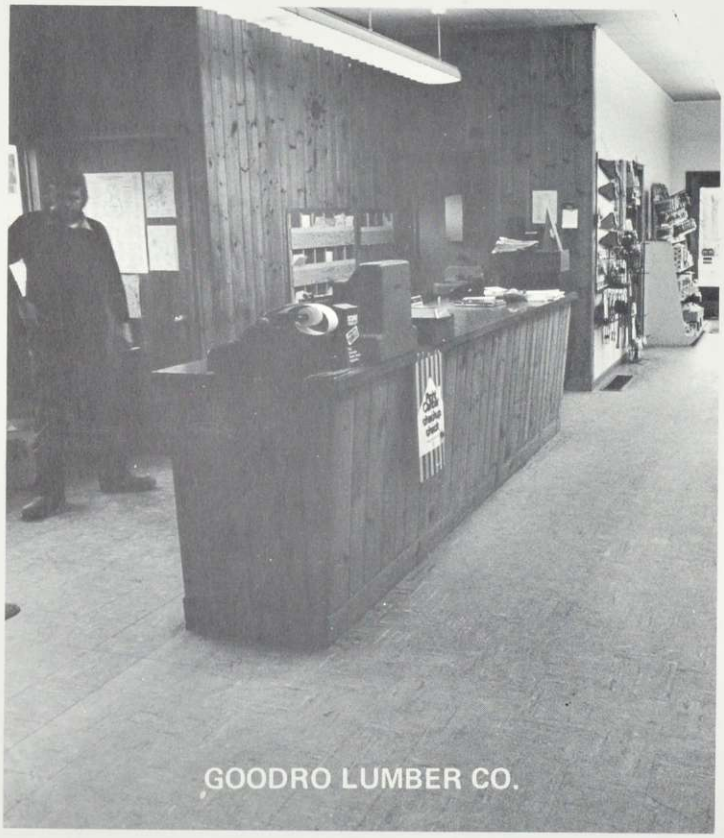

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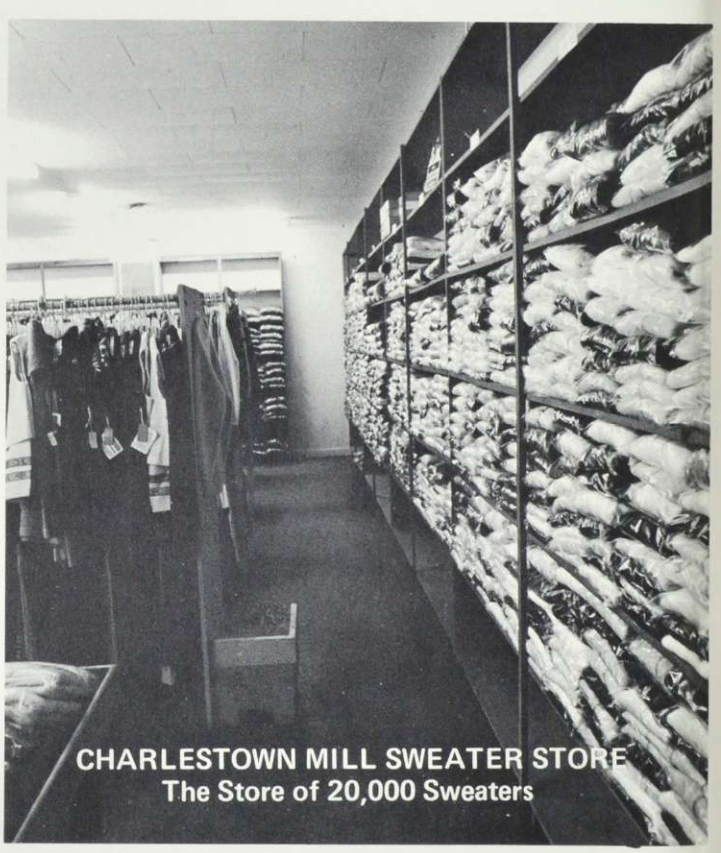

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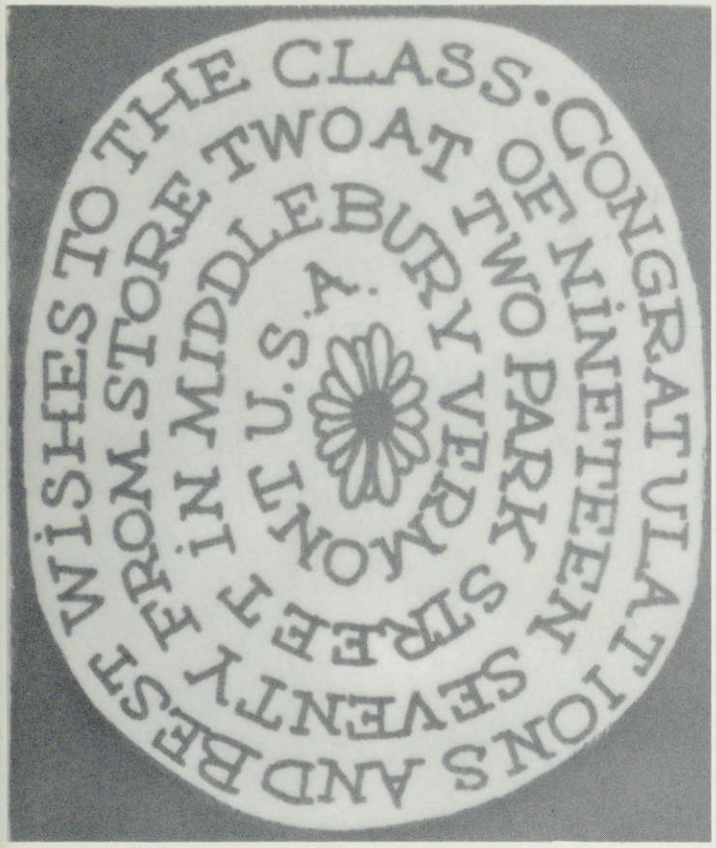

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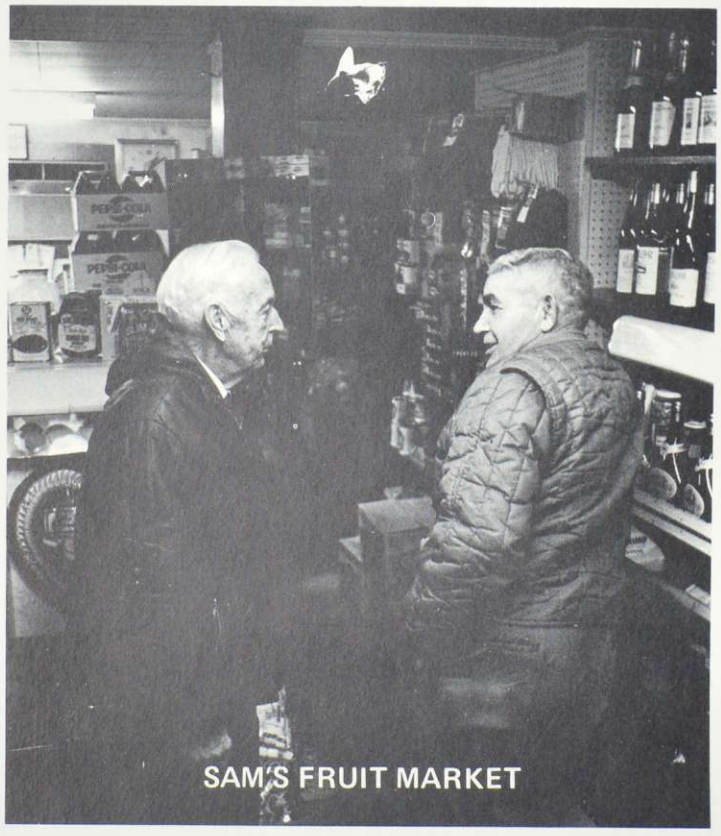
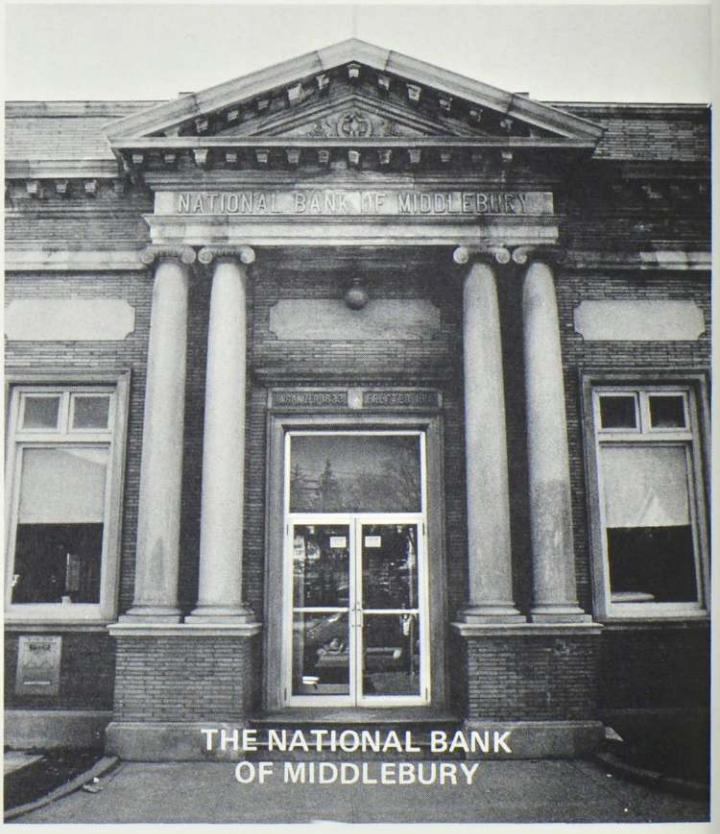


SAM'S FRUIT MARKET



THE NATIONAL BANK
OF MIDDLEBURY

A9 Coffrin, Douglas
Class of 1970

From: Douglas Coffin [douglas.coffin@lettercutter.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 8:56 AM
To: Morse, Kathryn T.
Subject: Your class of '70 presentation

Dear Kathryn:

I just wanted to thank you for your presentation to the class of '70 on June 5th at Basin Harbor. Your somewhat bemused attitude at us was appropriate. We are bemused, among other things, by those years, too. A few of us chatted about the experience afterwards and I just wanted to let you know some of the thoughts that were out there. But mostly, I just wanted to thank you for taking the time to package us and ask us to look at ourselves.

I think there were no captions on the photos in our yearbook for two reasons. One, was that we didn't know what was happening. The second was that the times we lived in were so uncertain, and yet we felt were so historic, that we didn't want to be trivial. I suppose almost any caption was going to run the risk of trivializing what was going on in the photo and we certainly didn't know.

Our country has had other moments of its rafters being shaken . . . women's suffrage, prohibition, its repeal, the Great Depression, WWII . . . but all of these were, loosely speaking, single issue moments. Back in the late 60s, it just seemed as though there were dozens of issues that were inextricably interconnected. You could go to a peace rally against the Vietnam War and wind up railing against the injustice of racism as the draft initially took poor Blacks disproportionately. Or suddenly wind up cheering for feminism as the politicos dismissed women who were negligible in our armed forces. It all just boiled up starting with the Civil Rights (1964), the assassinations, Democratic Convention in Chicago (1968) and we got Title IX in 1971(?), Clean Water Act 1972(?)... it was a blur.

It was also a blur because of drugs, for sure. And because these were the first international years for America, many countries despised our Vietnam War and gave our young men refuge. Music was huge and some of it from abroad . . . certainly the Beatles and the Stones, but Ravi Shankar . . . the sitar? Well, why not? Literature, publications, censorship, science . . . all fueled by the relatively opulent late 50s early 60s. The Cold War was chilly and so was mysterious China. The news became important for the first time and we listened. But we didn't understand.

Having thrown at you all these unifying issues, you'd think we would have been unified, but we weren't. Not any more than most classes. It would have been interesting to have polled us for some numbers. How many smoked dope regularly? 50%? LSD/mushrooms? 10%? Beer? 40%? Anti-war activists? 25%? Less? It was all there on campus but what makes less news is the great numbers of kids who just attended classes, did their work and called home, collect, of course. As you polled us, there was only one SDS person. Bea Ottinger took one of the photos.

In fact, if you had polled us there at Basin Harbor, I'm not sure what value our guesses would have. How many were we? About 90 out of a class of 450? This was my very first Middlebury reunion and just the Friday night. I think most of the people in that room were more regular attendees and had embraced the system that worked for them much earlier. Our class seemed to have a lot of outliers, marginals. Maybe that's just the way many of us like to think of ourselves.

I think the stats on giving to Middlebury would show that monies started to drop in '68, hit a low in '70, and began to rise again in '72. We were disenchanted with our institutions then and many of us took that disenchantment into our working careers and found our way in the world in alternative lifestyles. Most of the people in Basin Harbor had done well financially. Some members of our class have not . . . I wonder if, in fact, we are any different from any other class. Probably not. But I suspect we all would like to think so if no other reason than because those were such different years and we'd sort of like to prove it.

At any rate, one of my gripes, these days, is that we have lost the concept of a master-of ceremonies, a public moment of focus, the gatherer-of-us-up. We convene for a goodbye party, for example, and nobody ever says anything. You, however, gave us a wonderful focus. Thank you.

Douglas Coffin '70

On Jun 22, 2015, at 2:10 PM, Morse, Kathryn T. wrote:

Doug--

Thanks so much for your thoughtful reflections on the reunion gathering. It was, for me, an intense and fun experience, and also a reminder that the history we historians draw from documents represents only a small slice of the past. I agree that no single story or even set of stories could fully capture the experience of those years for all members of your class. All of your classmates who did, as you say, go to class and study and call home--and never wrote for the paper--left few records of their experiences; we cannot easily find or document their stories. And Reunion is, yes, an event which draws one set of graduates over time--often financially successfully or prominent--a selective process which reinforces itself every five years. Those without a desire to remember those times or to narrate their lives to others might very well avoid such events like the plague.

I thought further about the question of the yearbook after our discussion as well. I realize that the '70 yearbook really does function as a powerful document, exactly because of what you note here--what is absent and left unstated or unspecified. The lack of captions, the artistic photos of creative landscapes, the drama of the marches, all presented without comment--all of it DOES document the blur and the intensity and the inability of anyone to put words to it, or to reduce those events to the standard yearbook template of documenting happy years of college hijinks and annual traditions.

In that vein, would you allow me to share your thoughts with the archivists, so they can archive your reflections with the yearbook in the library, or with other Class of 1970 materials? I think it would add a lot to future researchers looking at the yearbook and seeing it as a quite powerful document of the time. Up to you however.

You are very welcome--it was really my privilege to join you for the evening, and perhaps our paths will cross again.

Kathy.

Professor and Chair, Department of History
John C. Elder Professor in Environmental Studies
kmorse@middlebury.edu
http://community.middlebury.edu/~kmorse

Mon 6/22/2015 8:53 PM
From Douglas Coffin to Kathryn T. Morse

Hello Kathryn:

Thanks for getting back to me so promptly. You are welcome to my musings, but, as you must know, I don't have any archivist pretensions. After I wrote you, I was pummeled by so many other things I could have added, could have written, but they were all, really, the same, blurry bits.

The only solid thing that happened is that we, our class, really appreciated your highlighting us, speaking to us, recognizing us and taking the time to organize your thoughts. It was very good of you.

Best wishes –
Douglas

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